WIN BIG $$$! pg. 6 • FREE HARVEY KEITEL TRADING CARD INSIDE!

HITCH

#1 • JUNE 1994 • $5

100% COBAIN FREE!

When Leonard Maltin Takes Over the World

PLUS:

Leonard Cohen Speaks! • A Trip to Darryl Starbird's Car Show • So You Wanna Go Greek?
Vivarin and You • Kevin Costner's 34 Crimes Against Humanity • David Hasselhoff Live
Speed Racer: The Movie • Rosacea: Hot 1994 Disease • Spring Movie Wrap-Up

InHITCH

#1 • JUNE 1994

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Bob "I'm not funny" Hope and Marlon "Marbles-mouth" Brando wrestle with an Oscar with the head of Leonard Maltin, something bound to happen before you even realize. And about the "100% Cobain Free" statement: We mean it.

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FORMALITIES

HITCH's Modus Operandi

"The truth is, I practice absurdity quite religiously."
—Alfred Hitchcock

That quote pretty much sums up the philosophy of **HITCH**, the magazine you now hold in your sweaty little hands. It is also the theme that will dominate and permeate every page of every edition from here on out. We'd like to think **HITCH** fills a glut in the periodical world. As our National Affairs editor Joe Rogers said, "Every time I go the newsstand, there's nothing there I want to read." Whereas the rare moment arises that he finds something, chances are he wouldn't read it all the way through. **HITCH**, however, should change all that. At least for Joe.

This is the magazine about everything we find interesting. And here's what you get:

- loads of reviews of a lot of stuff, both old and new,
- stuff that is funny,
- and stuff that you might not think is funny, but is to us.

As evidenced by this premiere issue, we'll be covering the worlds of film, video, music, print, television, news, politics, health, science and travel on a regular basis, albeit in a unique and skewered fashion. **HITCH** will be provided free of charge to heads of state for use in their daily briefings. That's why you'll find a letter to the President of the United States in each issue. This will be a medium in which we can express to him our views and needs. The first of these deals with hair.

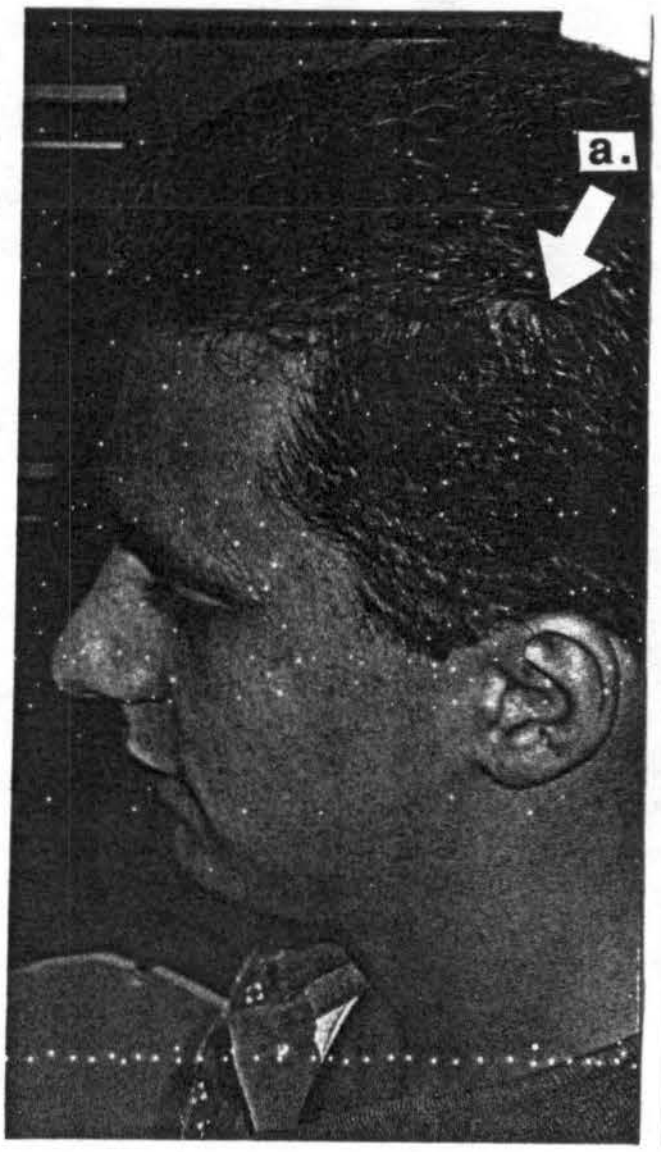
Pretentious? Pompous? Self-serving? *Nah.* Just fun. Great writing, but with a sense of humor to distinguish it from something to be taken 100 percent seriously.

We welcome your response to the pages within, good or bad, and your ideas and suggestions as well. Some of you already may have noticed our moniker is also the nickname fondly given to the famous director whose words hover above this column. That is no accident.

Our name is also what you call that thing on the back of your car that allows you to attach a trailer to it. That is no accident, either.

In other words, we can't be pegged down. Anything goes. Almost anything.

Rod Lott
Editor-in-Chief



KNOW YOUR EDITOR

a. burgeoning bald spot

HITCH

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Beck
Jim Carrey
the *Melrose Place* cast

Word We Find Funny
torso

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LETTER TO BILL

A Little Off the Left

"Vanity of vanities, All is vanity."
—Ecclesiastes 1:2

Dear Mr. President:

So, lemme ask you this: What's the deal with the hair? Now, I'm not gonna rehash all of that LAX stuff, but c'mon, Mr. P., look around you. It's hair, I'm telling ya! Hair that is causing all of these problems.

For example: You've got some people with black hair, some people with blond. And then you've got some people who don't have any at all. Long hair, short hair. The military makes a big deal about hair, and so do fast food restaurants. You've got hair centers, hair tonics, hairspray, hair gel, hair dye — all of this bother about hair, which is taking people's minds away from where they should be.

So, to begin: *What is hair?*

Hair is a substance that, first of all, separates the mammals from the reptiles. All reptiles are bald. Only some mammals are. Hair grows out of skin holes. Hair-holes, I think they're called. And hair is used to define a person — a punk, a politician, a newscaster — all these people have their own hair styles.

What are the hair requirements for employment at your White House? Collar length? No perms? Only blondes? Or is there any hair criteria?

Minorities get government aid due to skin color; perhaps minorities in various follicle-related departments should get special treatment also. Like, consider this, Bill: tax cuts for bald males under 30, and tax hikes for brown-haired males who part their hair on the side. Tuition grants for blonde women? I mean, doesn't hair define a person just as much as skin color? Why not?

Bill, it's ridiculous. You've got to cut out this minority favoritism, or you just may have to make campaign promises to the Hair Club for Men, as well as to the NAACP. Hair Leagues will sprout up all over; there's already some Afro-American groups around.

So why, Mr. President, have you followed suit and identified yourself with gray-haired people? Why not change your hair color every day, in order to further identify yourself with each of these different groups? Black hair on Lincoln's B-day, white hair on Washington's, a perm on MLK Day? Consider it, Mr. P! A real man-of-the people you'd be! As if to say to all the

poor redheads out there, "I'm with you! I'm on your side! *Ich bin eine rofkopf!*"

These things that people are saying nowadays — "I'm having a bad hair day." As if one couldn't tell, as if you needed to say something. Why are we so vain? I wonder if ancient peoples, before the time of mirrors, worried all that much about the state of their hair. What is hair appearance, really? It's almost as if one who has spent a large amount of time on their hair is saying, "Look at how superficial I am: I worked on my hair for 45 minutes this morning."

We're bombarded with these messages in advertisements everywhere: On the covers of magazines, we are told, "Fix your hair or be a loser." Grow it out. Cut it short. Curl it. Color it. Change it. Make it any way it isn't naturally. In short, try to be, or at least appear to be, something that you're not. Maybe then you'll be a worthy individual.

This is a serious matter, Mr. President, and one that I think you should capitalize on and make some money. How much do you think a plug for Vidal Sassoon'd net you? *And* it'd be free PR for yourself. Your picture in periodicals everywhere...and you'd be paid for it! Of course, it'd be nice if you remember whose idea it was and maybe cut me a little piece. At least think about it — will ya just do that?

Yours,

J Rogers

Joe Rogers

What Hillary Rodham Clinton Might Look Like With an Arrow Through Her Precious Head

MISC STUFF

PRBS

More News We Got, But Have No Idea Why

UT Southwestern Continuing Education Accreditation Renewed

DALLAS—The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas has been resurveyed by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and awarded accreditation for four years as a sponsor of continuing medical education for physicians.

"The continuing education program here has been very successful, particularly in presenting updates in state-of-the-art medicine for clinical practitioners," said Dr. George Race, longtime associate dean for continuing education at UT Southwestern.

"Our program relies primarily on our esteemed, well-known faculty, thus we're able to draw people to UT Southwestern from many regions and states," Race said.

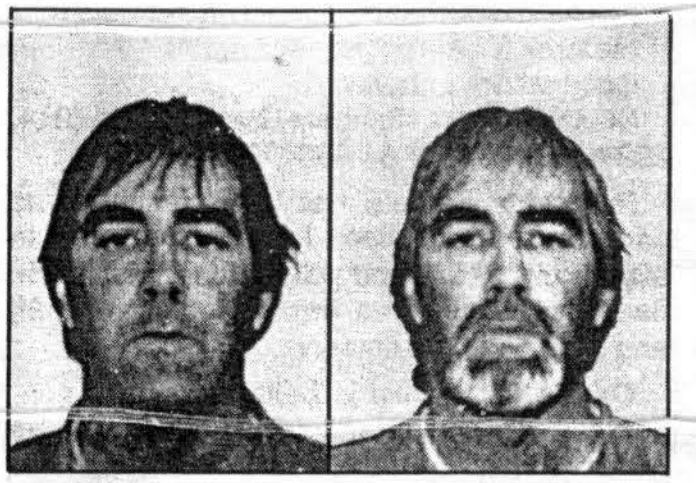
ACCME accreditation assures both physicians and the public that continuing medical education activities sponsored by UT Southwestern meet the highest standards of the Essentials for Accreditation specified by the ACCME.

"The accreditation process sets a high standard for continuing medical education nationwide. We're fortunate to receive new accreditation for four years," Race said. "We have a good, strong program, and it will continue to be so."

WIN $$$!

The FBI's Fugitive of the Month

WANTED
For Interstate Flight / Child Molestation



Robert Eugene Bevis

ALIAS: Bob Bevis
DOB: 4 / 5 / 42
BIRTHPLACE: Edinburg, IN
HEIGHT / WEIGHT: 6', 200 lbs.
BUILD: medium
HAIR: graying brown
EYES: blue
COMPLEXION: medium
RACE: Caucasian
NATIONALITY: American
DEFINING SCARS: on back; 3-inch scar on left hand; 1/2-inch on right lower leg
SOCIAL SECURITY: 316-44-9679
OCCUPATIONS: Carpenter, mechanic, plumber, welder

According to Charles Raymond, author of *The FBI's Most Wanted* (Globe Mini-Mags, 1994), "Bevis is a CB and ham radio enthusiast who is capable of repairing radio equipment. He frequents topless nightclubs and has dated several dancers.

"Bevis, an alleged drug user, is being sought for molesting his former wife's daughter. He may have suicidal tendencies.

"This sex-obsessed sicko poses a possible menace to young children, so you'll be doing society a favor if you notify the FBI the minute you lay eyes on him....To catch him, it will probably be necessary to key in on his spare time activities as a CB and ham radio operator and as a fan of topless bars."

Unshaven, the man could be mistaken for an Allman brother. If you see Bevis, contact your local FBI office, or call the Washington HQ at (202) 324-3000.

Heapin' Mailbag

Beginning with **HITCH** #2, look for "Heapin' Mailbag," a column, logically enough, of your letters, comments and hate mail. Send your acrimonious missives and anything else (stuff you'd like reviewed, for instance) to: **HITCH**, 5504 N. Tulsa, Oklahoma City, OK, 73112. Or, e-mail us on American Online at the address: rlott. You might just get a free prize.

So You Wanna Be a Greek?

By Randy Hyden

What is it that makes a greek man such an incredibly cool collegiate stud? Like that old Pepsi commercial said, it's not the clothes you wear and it's not what you drink. The truth is, it's your name!

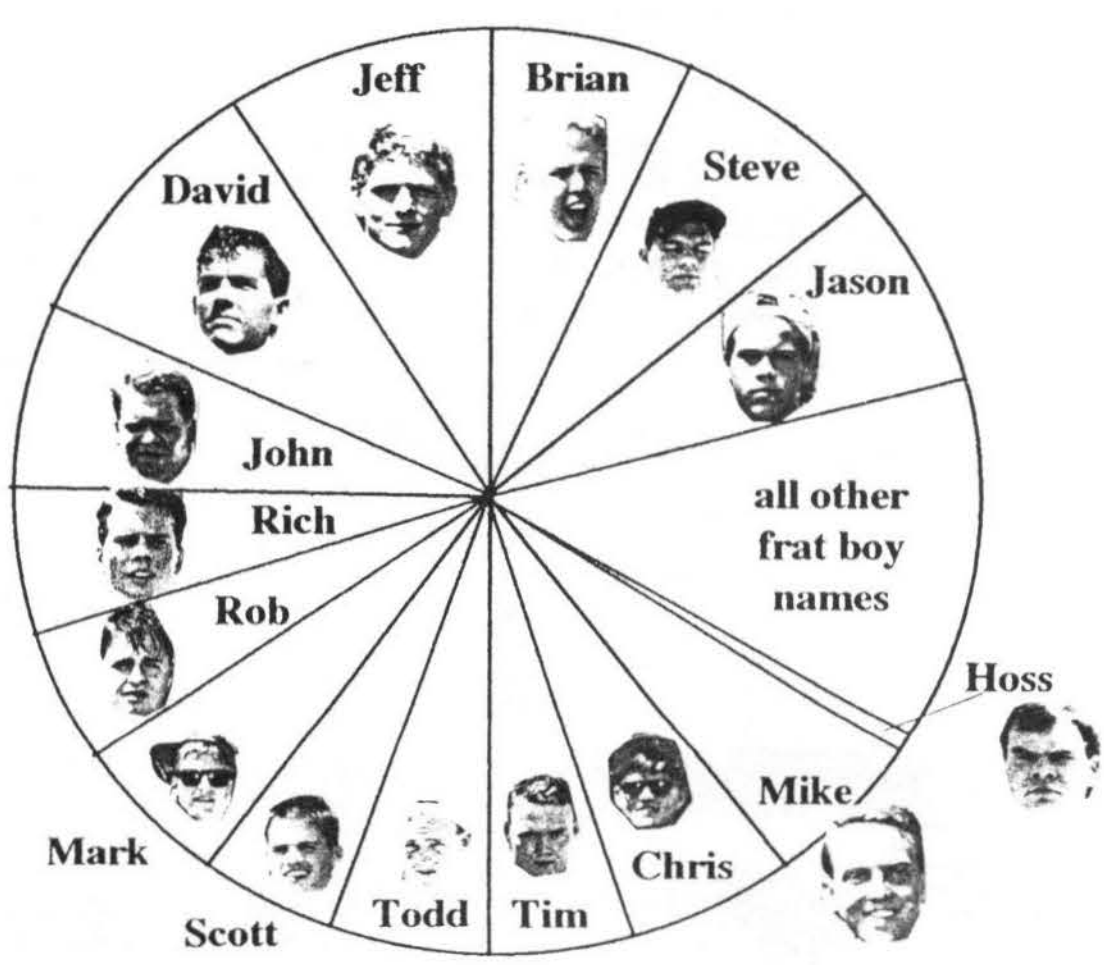
Below are the results of an exclusive **HITCH** investigation, done with the help of resident statistician Chance Giffhorn, revealing the most popular names of fraternity men, according to the study's sample of a recent University of Oklahoma pledge class. Applying the results, good news if your name is Jeff or David! You have a 10 percent chance of being in a frat on name alone! Here are the complete results, listing the names to have and the corresponding chances of being that guy you run into at a party who asks, "Hey, Tacker! Wanna brewski?"

NAME	%AGE OF FRAT BOYS WITH THAT NAME
Jeff	10%
David	10%
Steve	7%
Brian	7%
John	7%
Jason	6%
Chris	5%
Mike	5%
Todd	4%
Tim	4%
Scott	4%
Rich	4%
Rob	4%
Mark	4%
Hoss	0.2%

The world's most famous Roman goes Greek as the Dekes initiate Pope John Paul II into their beloved organization.

WHEEL OF FORTUNATE NAMES

Compiled by Chance Giffhorn



MARGIN OF ERROR: + / - 3 percentage pts.

Loopy News

Sesame Street's Longtime Companions

Thanks to some overly concerned parental units in the oft-misspelled state of Mississippi, the line "On my way to where the air is sweet" from *Sesame Street*'s theme song has taken on a whole new meaning.

Bert and Ernie, the show's cone- and oval-shaped headed roomies (respectively), were scheduled to appear at the Tupelo Convention. And then some parents raised a fuss because they thought Bert and Ernie, although cute Muppets, were gay.

The Children's Television Workshop, which produces the long-running PBS series, prepared a statement in defense of their foam-rubber stars. According to *The New York Times Magazine*, the statement says "that Bert and Ernie are puppets, after all, and are just meant to show preschoolers that you can be friends with someone even if you have differences. They're not even anatomically correct."

So now that that issue's over with, it's time to ask: Did Mr. Hooper die of AIDS?

Belch Much? Join the Club!

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Are you doing 20 million tasks at once?
2. Are you approaching the "maximum stress threshold?"
3. Are acid indigestion and heartburn eating you alive?

If you said (or even just thought) "yes" to any or all of the above questions, Maalox wants you. The antacid company has formed a club for stressed-out citizens with gas. Called "The Maalox Moments Club," *the* newly formed organization is absolutely free to join...and the benefits are numerous: a membership card, a bumper sticker, a not-at-all-funny pamphlet about Maalox moments and a catalog advertising those hot and in-demand Maalox sweatshirts and other embarrassing apparel.

To join, simply call 1-800-MAA-LOX5, and thank us for it later. We suggest applying the "Honk If You're Having a Maalox Moment" bumper sticker to a random ugly truck in your office's parking lot; we did, and it was there for days before the owner noticed.

Help Us Out

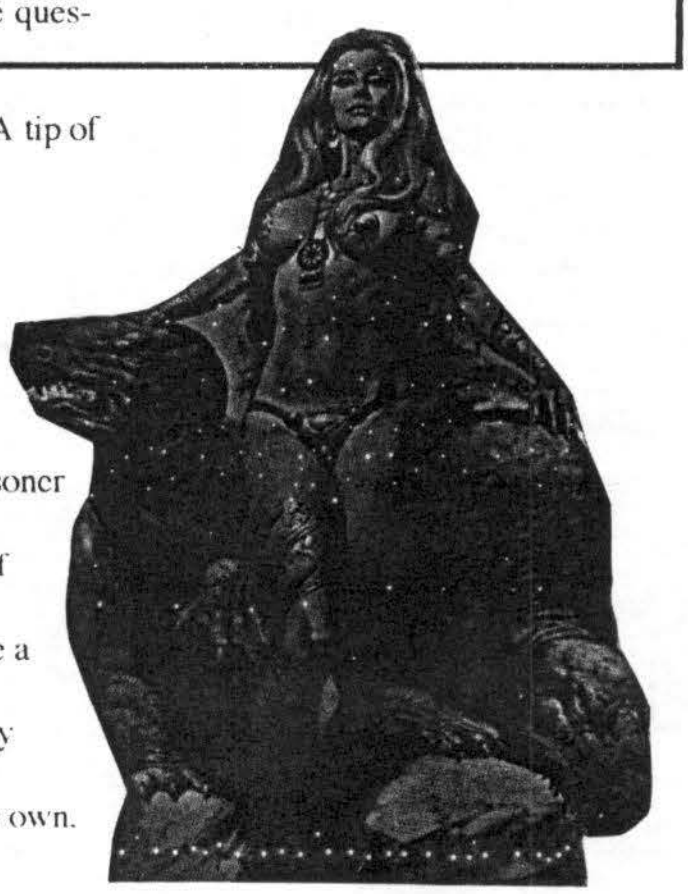
Send your items of unusual interest to: **HITCH**, 5504 N. Tulsa, Oklahoma City, OK, 73112 or via America Online at "rlott."

Movietime!

Simply match the synopsis to the correct film title. (A tip of the hat to the *Golden Movie Retriever*.)

A. *Yor*
B. *Gor*
C. *Krull*
D. *She*
E. *Bill*

1. A prince searches for the Glaive and rescues his young bride, held prisoner by the Beast of the Black Forest.
2. A magic ring sends a meek college professor to a faraway world full of barbarianism and brutal treachery.
3. A hunter lost in a time warp searches for his true identity, his only clue a golden medallion around his neck.
4. A warrior rules a post-apocalyptic world and is kidnapped by a wealthy merchant who uses her to fight mutants.
5. Mickey Rooney is a mentally retarted man who wants to get out on his own.



ANSWERS: 1-C, 2-B, 3-A, 4-D, 5-E

Tom Neesnan's Belated Movie Reviews

SpaceCamp
(1986)
Rating: 9 1/2

This was probably the best movie I have seen since *Firefox*! Just close your eyes and imagine yourself going to a real live space camp! Well, of course, not while you're in the theater! Keep 'em open or you'll miss many good parts! There were lots of good actors, and there were lots of good actresses to go along with all the good actors in this movie about real live space camps. Starring are a cute robot and Kate Capshaw — boy, is she a looker! I recommend this film quicker than you can say "What a great film!" because you'll be saying it pretty quick into the show!

The Aviator
(1985)
Rating: 9 1/2

Two folks I gotta thank before I tell ya 'bout a doozy! Well, actually three, now that I think about it. First of all, Orville and Wilbur Wright. Secondly, Thomas Edison. The Wright Brothers for the invention of aviation, and Mr. Edison for the invention of moving pictures. The collaboration of these three gentlemen is indirectly responsible for a great picture called *The Aviator*. Christopher Reeve and Rosanna Arquette give stunning performances. I liked it a lot. When I got home, I put together eight airplane models! *Eight!* Go see this film and feel the aviation thrill for months.

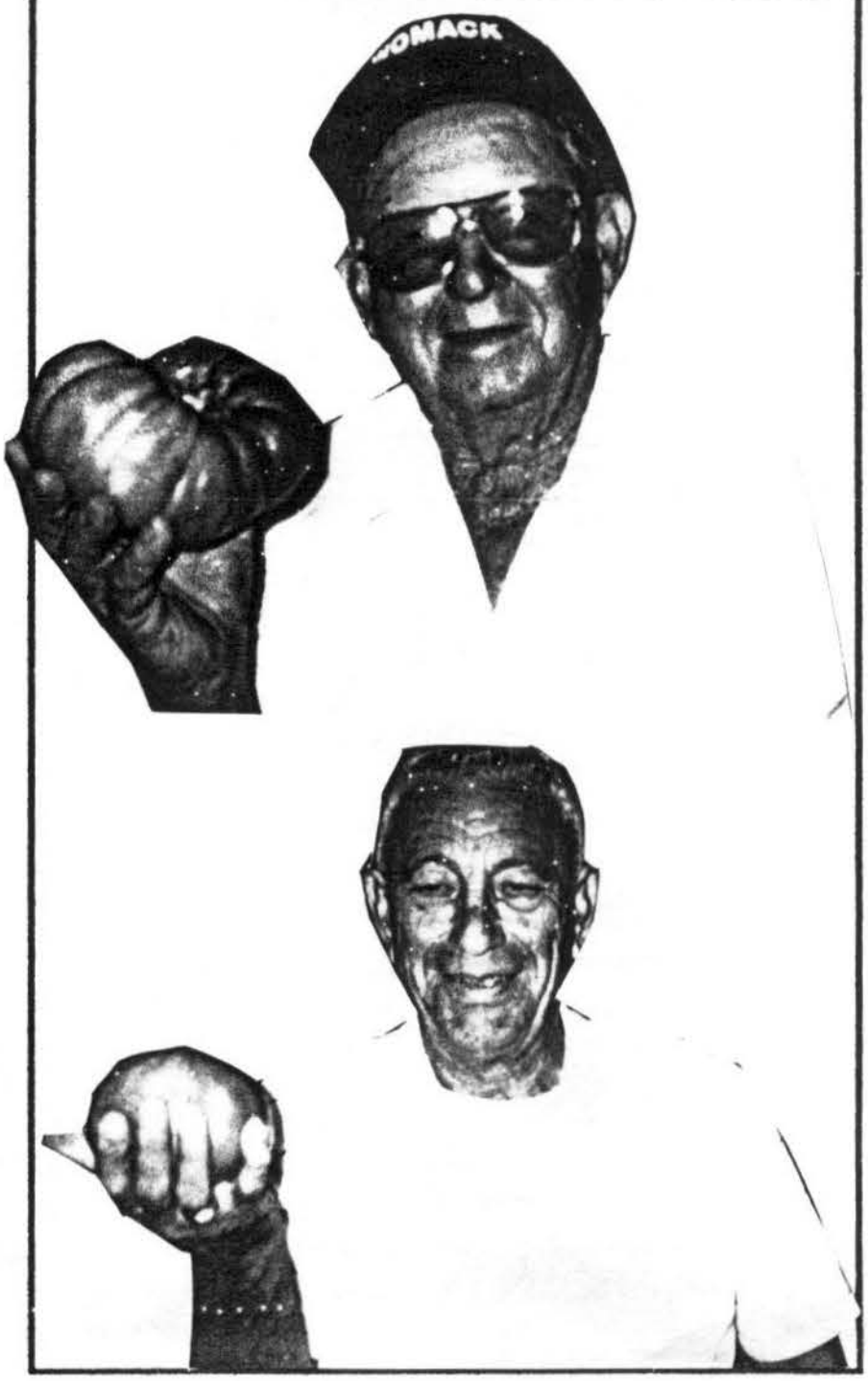
Swing Shift
(1984)
Rating: 9 1/2

A Rosie the Riveter movie starring Goldie Hawn! What casting! Kinda like Roseanne Arnold starring in a food-eating picture with Dom DeLuise. Of course, Burt Reynolds would have to be in it, too, but that's off the subject. *Swing Shift* kept me swingin' and a-shiftin' in my seat with laughter as Goldie riveted her way to stardom. Great picture, great cast, great Scott!

See ya at the movies!

SALUTE TO THE BACKYARD FARMER

Show Us Your 'Maters



A NEAT PRANK

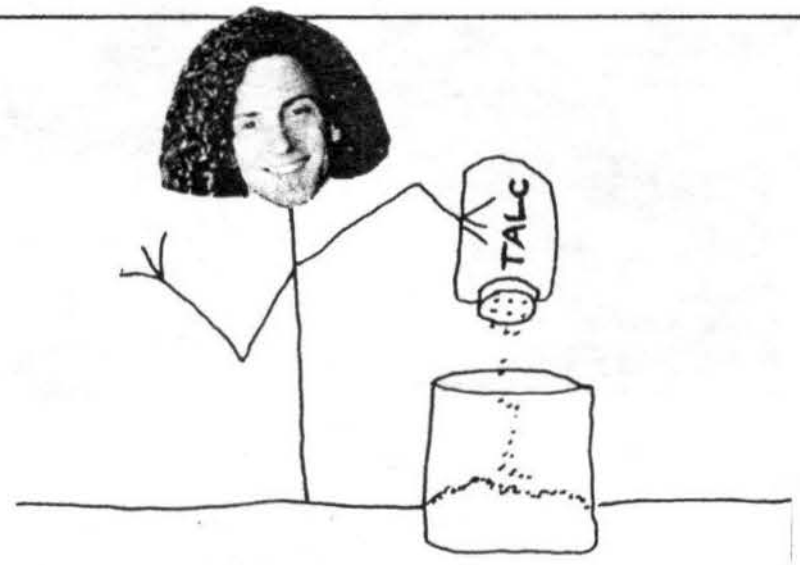
How to Make Someone Think His Car Is on Fire

By Rod Lott

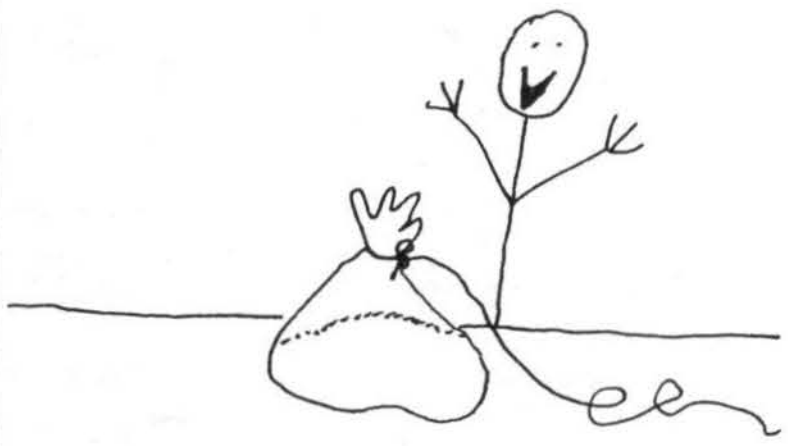
There are many neat pranks to play on people. Unfortunately, most of them are illegal. Thanks to technology, this new evil feature known as Caller ID has effectively decimated the art of prank phone calls as we know it.

Luckily, however, some mean-spirited things are still 100 percent OK. This is one of them:

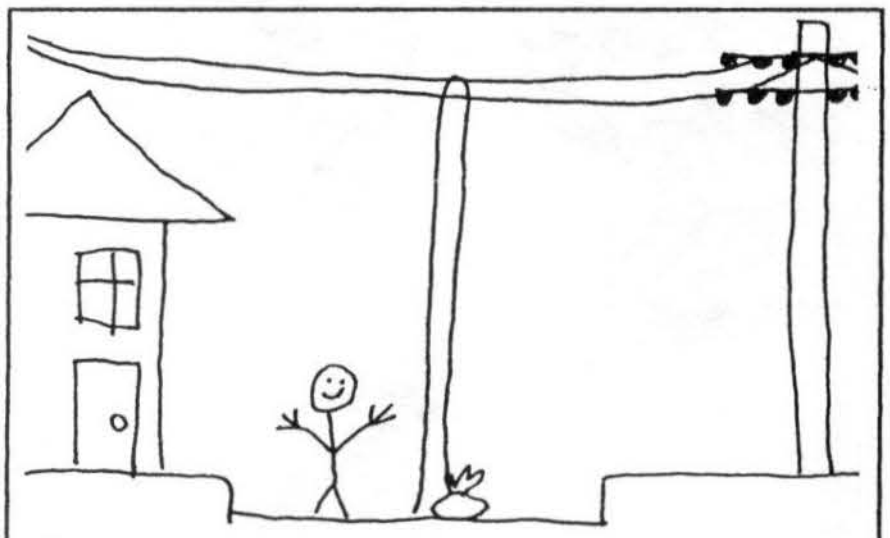
To make someone think their car is on fire is a wonderful thing, even more so when you realize this prank is pulled not on stationary cars, but actual *moving* ones. "How so?" you ask. Simple.



1. Take a plastic bag (preferably Baggie® size) and fill it with your common household talcum powder. Flour may be substituted, but the effect is not quite as spectacular.



2. Tie (or close in some manner) the bag. Tie a very long piece of string around it tight. The string should be long enough to go over a telephone line and back again. Black thread works best because of its apparent invisibility.



3. Go to a residential street over which a telephone line passes. Throw the bag over the line so that the string hangs on it and the bag comes down on the other side and touches the street. Make sure the bag sits in the middle of either side of the street.

4. Run, hide, wait.

When a car approaches the bag, the front bumper will catch the string. The forward momentum of the car will cause the string to lift the bag off the ground. If the car is traveling at a fairly high rate of speed (and what car doesn't on residential roads?), the force will cause the bag to burst with a heavy thwack on the car's underside. To the driver, this sounds like a bad thing ("What the hell? Did I throw a rod? Lose my transmission?"). Out of habit, the hapless motorist will glance back in his rearview mirror, only to see a cloud of smoke. And where there's smoke, there's fire, sending our driver into hysterics. The smoke, of course, is in actuality, nothing more than powder. But he doesn't know that, and therein lies the fun.

STATS

ZZZ All That You Can ZZZ: The United States Army's Sleeping Problem

As reported in the Dec. 1993 issue of *Military Medicine* (Vol. 158, for those of you cataloguing your back-issue library numerically), the United States Army has a bit of a sleeping problem.

Files from the Army's Safety Center for 1984-1991 show 68 ground accidents involving sleeping soldiers, "53 of which resulted in injuries and 15 in fatalities. The average cost to the Army, adjusted to 1991 dollars, was $8,300 for each injury and $61,900 for each fatality."

Despite heavy amounts of care and caution, "During the movement of a large force of vehicles and soldiers into or through an unmarked field area, particularly at night with lights out, there is bound to be confusion and disorientation."

And how. Here now, some highlights:

CATEGORY 1
Sleeping Around a Vehicle

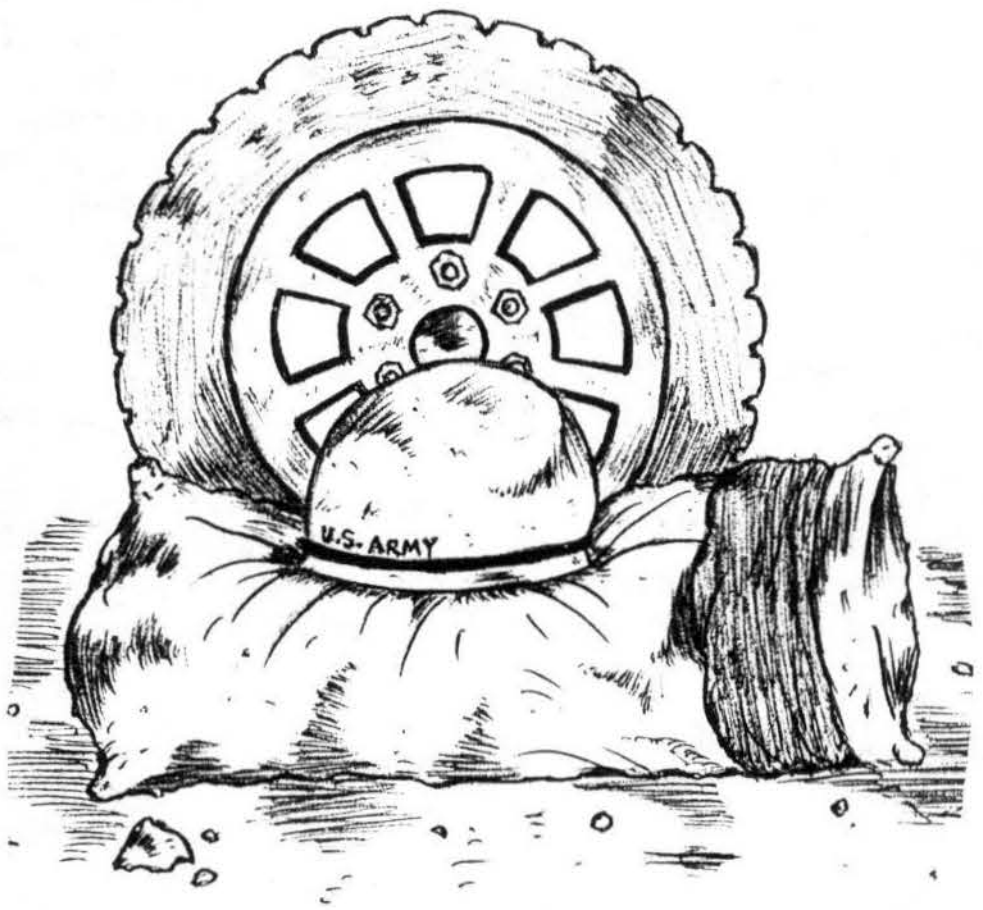
• A driver of an Armored Personnel Carrier mistook a slumbering soldier in a sleeping bag as a shallow rock, *running over him and moving* off him only "when the driver noticed feet kicking in the air."

• A driver of a 1.5-ton truck one-upped the APC driver by running over *two* sleeping soldiers. After hearing screams, the driver backed up, running over them again.

• A soldier sleeping under the center of a 5-ton dump truck got caught by his gear and dragged 20 feet.

CATEGORY 2
Sleeping Inside / On a Vehicle

• While maintaining a tank, a tank commander accidentally activated a switch, causing the turret of a 50-caliber machine gun to rotate, crushing a sleeping gunner's head.



• In a similar case, a man's helmet-topped head was caught between the turret and the tank hull, cracking his helmet and leaving a 4-inch cut above his eye, right down to the skull.

• A main turret gun was lowered onto a soldier sleeping on top of a tank.

CATEGORY 3
Sleeping in Open Areas

• Overcome by fatigue, a platoon guard fell asleep, only to get his head run over by an oncoming tracked vehicle, "killing him."

• Soldier in sleeping bag awakened to find 5-ton truck atop his person.

CATEGORY 4
Sleeping in an Apparently "Safe" Area

• A soldier sleeping beside a tree had his head run over by an M2 Infantry Fighting Vehicle, the driver of which failing to wear his night vision goggles. Head stays intact, helmet not so lucky.

• While waiting to refuel, an APC driver struck up a conversation with Mr. Sandman "but continued to drive," running over a guard's left foot.

• A 5-ton truck and trailer drove over a foxhole, housing one unlucky solider who died of asphyxiation.

• After painting a vehicle, a soldier accidentally put it into forward instead of reverse and knocked a 55-gallon drum onto a cot-reclining NCO, in turn knocking him into a door and breaking his collar bone.

—Rod Lott

COMING UP IN FUTURE COLUMNS OF STATS:

- Rocket Grenade Injuries!
- Suicide Method Lethality!
- Risk Factors for Fatal Residential Fires!
- Ocular Trauma in Major League Baseball Players!

HOLLYWOOD CONFIDENTIAL

The Last of the Mohican Grocery Cart Retrievers

By Joe Rogers

Whilst working at a grocery store — one of those big grocery stores where you have to bag your own food and wait behind the food stamp customers, I knew a fellow employee who had been in the 1992 blockbuster *The Last of the Mohicans*. The makers of this movie needed lots of Indians for their film, and so they hunted them out in reservations, mostly here in Oklahoma.

This co-worker, Tony — who at work cleans bathroom, collects stray grocery carts from the parking lot and helps elderly women to their cars — was one of the Indians they got to stand around in the movie. It made the film more "authentic."

So, one afternoon, I sat down with him in the break room and asked him some questions about his movie star days — his days of fame, right alongside matinee idol Daniel Day-Lewis and being directed by that guy who created *Miami Vice*.

Q: First of all, did you enjoy the product?
A: What do you mean, product?
Q: Well, you know, by that I mean the end result?
A: End result?
Q: The movie. Did you enjoy the movie?
A: Well, I guess. Yeah, kind of.
Q: And what did you do?
A: I was an extra, they called it.
Q: So you just...
A: So I just stood there. I didn't do anything, really. I was just in the background.
Q: I understand. What did you have to do to get the part?
A: First, I had to be an Indian, which I am. Then I had to get a Mohawk. And that was the biggest thing I had to do.
Q: How much did you get paid?
A: $100 a day for about a week.
Q: And what was the worst part of it?
A: The food was crappy and they served us all at once. Other than that, it wasn't too bad.
Q: Who was in it?
A: Daniel Day-Lewis and Madeleine Stowe.
Q: Who directed it?
A: Michael Mann. That guy was a real dick, man! He had all his meals flown in by helicopter. We're all down there eatin' all at once this crappy chow food and he's gettin' his food flown in especially for him by helicopter.
Q: So you didn't get to talk with him much, huh?
A: Nope.
Q: If you had to do it again, would you?
A: Hell, yeah! That was the easiest $800 I ever made.
Q: What did you think of Madeleine Stowe in *Bad Girls*?
A: I thought she was hot. I thought they were all hot, especially Drew Barrymore. *Firestarter* was on TV last night.

It's All on Cable!

Your Guide to Fairly Noteworthy Programming

David Hasselhoff & His Baywatch Friends
(Pay-Per-View, June 17)

Believe it, for it's true! Forget the Stones' summer tour and tune it to watch former *Knight Rider* David "I'm big overseas" Hasselhoff and a few of his *Baywatch* pals *live* as he brings his European concert tour home for his U.S. singing debut.

Clip, save and utilize this checklist for the evening's festivities:

HASSELHOFF CHECKLIST

- ☐ Cheesy covers played
- ☐ 20th gratuitous bikini shot
- ☐ David removes shirt
- ☐ Female audience member squeals in delight
- ☐ Audience visibly tired

Leonard Maltin: Oscar Soothsayer?

By Rod Lott

Envision, if you will, a perfect world.

Gas would be cheaper than Coca-Cola, criminals would be locked up for life and, most obviously, the responsibility of selecting recipients of filmdom's highest honor would rest on the shoulders of one man and one man alone.

That man, of course, would be *Entertainment Tonight*'s very own bespectacled, bearded movie maniac, Leonard Maltin.

If Len—as close, personal friends are sure to call him—were assigned to pick this year's crop of Academy Award winners, we bet one could gauge accurately the winners and losers before any envelopes were ever opened.

With the help of our cracker-jack staff mathematician, we at **HITCH** have devised a method of determining who Len would single out in 1994, using the Best Actor category as an example. Simply by culling data from the latest edition of *Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide* and adding up Len's ratings for each star's previous films and then dividing by the total number of films that person has appeared in, one is left with the Maltin Factor. The highest score—4, in keeping with Len's four-star scale—denotes the lucky star.

For scientific purposes, only theatrical releases have been considered, thereby rendering Tom Hanks' bravura turn in the made-for-TV *Mazes and Monsters* null and void.

Daniel Day-Lewis
In the Name of the Father

The Bounty	3.0
Eversmile, New Jersey	1.5
Gandhi	3.5
The Last of the Mohicans	3.5
My Beautiful Laundrette	3.5
My Left Foot	3.5
A Room with a View	3.0
Stars and Bars	0.0
Sunday, Bloody Sunday	3.0
The Unbearable Lightness of Being	3.5
Maltin Factor (28 / 10) =	**2.80**

Laurence Fishburne
What's Love Got to Do with It?

Apocalypse Now	3.5
Boyz 'N the Hood	3.0
Cadence	1.5
Deep Cover	2.5
Gardens of Stone	2.5
King of New York	2.0
A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors	3.0
Quicksilver	1.5
Red Heat	1.5
School Daze	2.5
Willie and Phil	3.0
Maltin Factor (26.5 / 11) =	**2.41**

Tom Hanks
Philadelphia

Bachelor Party	2.0
Big	3.5
The Bonfire of the Vanities	0.0
The 'Burbs	2.0
Dragnet	2.5
Every Time We Say Goodbye	2.5
He Knows You're Alone	1.5
Joe Versus the Volcano	2.5
A League of Their Own	3.0
The Man with One Red Shoe	2.0
The Money Pit	2.0
Nothing in Common	2.0
Punchline	3.0
Sleepless in Seattle	3.0
Splash	3.0
Turner & Hooch	2.0
Volunteers	1.5

Maltin Factor (38 / 17) = 2.24

Anthony Hopkins
The Remains of the Day

Audrey Rose	2.5
The Bounty	3.0
Bram Stoker's Dracula	3.5
A Bridge Too Far	2.0
A Change of Seasons	2.5
Chaplin	2.5
A Chorus of Disapproval	2.0
Desperate Hours	1.5
A Doll's House	2.5
The Efficiency Expert	3.0
84 Charing Cross Road	3.5
The Elephant Man	3.5
Freejack	1.5
The Girl from Petrovka	2.0
The Good Father	2.5
Hamlet	2.5
Howards End	4.0
International Velvet	3.0
Juggernaut	3.0
The Lion in Winter	4.0
The Looking Glass War	1.5
Magic	2.0
The Silence of the Lambs	3.5
Young Winston	3.0

Maltin Factor (64.5 / 24) = 2.68

Liam Neeson
Schindler's List

The Big Man: Crossing the Line	2.5
The Bounty	3.0
Darkman	2.5
The Dead Pool	2.5
Duet for One	2.5
Ethan Frome	2.5
Excalibur	3.5
The Good Mother	2.0
High Spirits	0.0
Husbands and Wives	3.5
Krull	2.0
Leap of Faith	2.5
The Mission	2.5
Next of Kin	1.5
A Prayer for the Dying	1.5
Satisfaction	0.0
Shining Through	2.5
Suspect	3.0
Under Suspicion	2.0

Maltin Factor (42 / 19) = 2.21

Therefore, the formidable Mr. Maltin (host of *Bugs and Daffy: The Wartime Cartoons*) would single out the hyphenated Mr. Day-Lewis. Although this isn't likely to happen in the real Oscar race, that's not the point. Indeed, Day-Lewis lost the gold, not even to Len's second choice yet, but his *fourth*. The Oscar went to Turner (as in *and Hooch* fame).

The point is this: It's Leonard, and we love him. God bless you, Mr. Maltin.

Leonard for Rent!

Aside from hosting duties on "ET," Len has graced us with his pleasant presence on several videocassettes. Among his finest hours:

Cartoon Madness: The Fantastic Max Fleischer Cartoons

Len hosts this comp tape / documentary of innovative animator Max Fleischer and his greatest cartoon creations: Betty Boop, Superman and Popeye. Also includes "the unsung Fleischer classic 'Raggedy Ann and Andy.'" (Republic, 1994)

Cartoons for Big Kids

"Do I love cartoons!" quips Len on this tape, full of cartoons at one time considered racy and "adult." Despite its short length (44 minutes), well worth buying. (Turner, 1989)

Gremlins 2: The New Batch

In a cameo in Joe Dante's spoofy sequel, Len is mauled by critters. Far and away one of the finest scenes in cinematic history. (Warner, 1990)

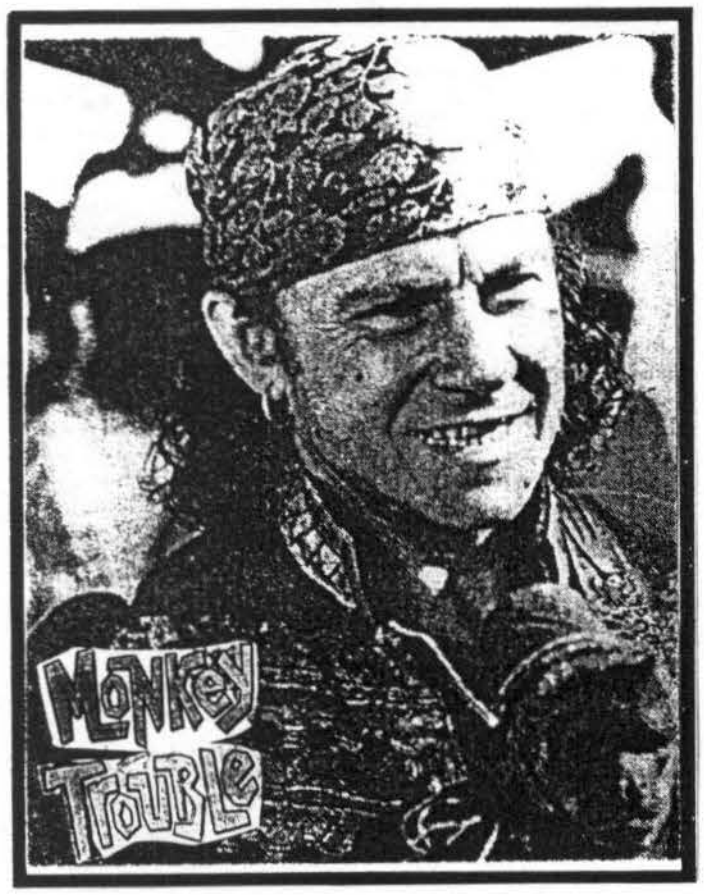
FREE! EXCLUSIVE!

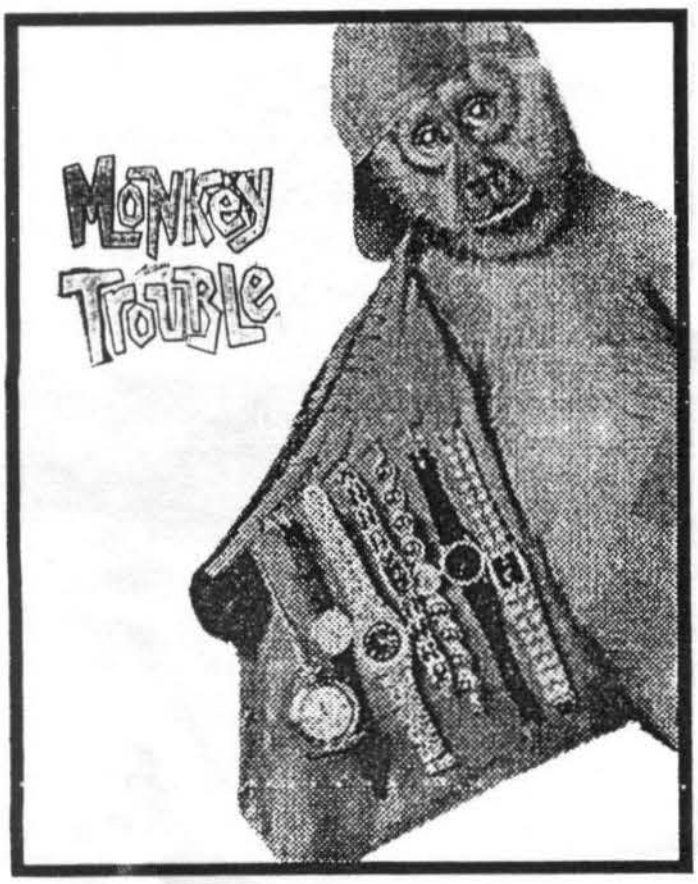
Swap with pals!

MONKEY TROUBLE

Trading Cards

Collect 'em all!





IN THE NEXT SERIES:

#5 Christopher McDonald (Dad)
#6 Director Franco Amurri
#7 Dodger Goes Loco!
#8 Swiping a Chiquita
#9 Dodger Foils the Bad Guys
#10 Gypsy & Dodger Together Again!

DON'T MONKEY AROUND!
BE THE FIRST ON YOUR BLOCK WITH THE COMPLETE SET!

2 THORA BIRCH

Lil' Thora plays Eva, the girl who finds the rascally monkey! She names him Dodger, because he is *sooo* silly! The monkey picks pockets!

BEST LINE: "Dodger, you're my bestest friend in the whole wide world!"

FUN FACT: Despite her last name, Thora is not really made of tree bark!

Monkey Trouble

1 HARVEY KEITEL

Harvey plays a silly Gypsy, but not as silly as his pet capuchin monkey, a mischievious lil' scamp who runs away from him! The monkey picks pockets!

BEST LINE: "You see monkey?"

FUN FACT: In real life, Harvey's teeth are not really greasy!

Monkey Trouble

4 MIMI ROGERS

Mimi plays Thora's mother, but doesn't know about her daughter's monkey! Mimi is not silly, but oh, boy, her daughter's monkey sure is! He picks pockets!

BEST LINE: "Eva, have you been eating all the bananas?"

STARTLING COINCEDENCE: Mimi appeared naked in *Playboy*! Dodger is naked the whole way through *Monkey Trouble*!

Monkey Trouble

3 DODGER

Dodger is the silly monkey who causes all the trouble (lots!) and picks pockets! He sure is cute, but watch out, too, because he's a silly trickster!

BEST LINE: None. Monkeys can't talk!

FUN FACT: Another silly monkey movie is *Going Ape* with Tony Danza!

SAFETY TIP: Monkeys bite! Don't touch!!!

Monkey Trouble

Spring Movie Crap-Up

By Rod Lott

That's right: *crap-up*, as opposed to a mere wrap-up. Spring 1994 should forever go down in the annals of cinematic history as perhaps the worst spring season ever. Given this year's offerings, it is completely obvious that the studios save their big guns and better wares for the more lucrative (but overcrowded) summer season.

Without a doubt, the worst of the offenders is ***Ace Ventura: Pet Detective.***

How in the hell did this pull in $70 million? I agree with the national consensus that Jim Carrey conjures of images of a retarted Jerry Lewis. When I saw the previews for this idiot's *Citizen Kane*, I vowed never to see this sophomoric piece of celluoid. The endless barrage of TV ads further hit home the point. Even when it hit the dollar theaters, I vowed to resist (as if there was ever a form of temptation at work). But now that it's on video (and for only 20 bucks), guess what? That's right: I still won't see it.

The rest of the losers:

With Honors
Jimmy Hollywood

Either or, it's the same thing: the pathetic Joe Pesci vehicle. It seems after winning a Best Supporting Oscar for *GoodFellas*, Pesci has been clamoring for leading man status, succeeding only in the entertaining *My Cousin Vinny*. For every *Vinny*, however, there's *The Public Eye*, *The Super* and this terrible twosome, the former featuring Pesci as a bum (but bear in mind, a Harvard bum) and the latter as a would-be actor. Barry Levinson, fresh off the career-killer *Toys*, redefines mediocrity with his witless *Jimmy*.

3 Ninjas Kick Back

Colt, Rocky and Tum-Tum are back in an all-new adventure? I'd see it only if they each take a swift kick to the face.

Coming soon to rob a convenience store near you: The *3 Ninjas*, seen here just kickin' back.

Bad Girls

And a very bad idea. Luckily, Andie MacDowell had the success of *Four Weddings and a Funeral* to divert everyone's attention.

You So Crazy

Martin Lawrence, you so dumbshit.

Threesome
PCU

These mindless teen comedies might have been funny if I were in eighth grade and it were 1984 all over again. But I'm not and it's not, so they aren't.

D2: The Mighty Ducks
The Chase
Major League II

Not only do Martin Sheen's dimwitted sons share his genes, but horrible agents as well. Estevez redeemed mid-May by ditching that wench Paula Abdul.

Being Human

Need further proof that Robin Williams really truly *isn't* funny? OK, here it is.

The Favor

An apt title if only Orion had kept it on the shelf.

Cops and Robbersons

Chevy Chase continues to put a severe Kevorkian spin on his career. It's not even sad anymore.

Brainscan

"Wanna play?" No thanks.

On Deadly Ground

Steven Seagal in Eskimoville fights off corporate baddies with a Davy Crockett wardrobe and stiff directorial skills.

Not even worth the minimal space the above films got to mention: *Iron Will*, *The Air Up There*, *My Girl 2*, *Blue Chips*, *White Fang 2*, *Angie*, *Surviving the Game*, *Above the Rim*, *Gunmen*, *Lightning Jack* and *Clifford*.

Coach Estevez consults his *Mighty* sucks.

Kevin Costner's 34 Crimes Against Humanity

By Rod Lott

So what if his name translates into big box-office bucks? "Bucks" rhymes with "sucks" and no other actor knows how to kiss the film industry's ass quite like Kevin Costner.

His good movies boil down to *The Untouchables* (1987), *A Perfect World* (1993) and little else. Bonus points to Lawrence Kasdan for cutting his part out of *The Big Chill*, thereby ensuring a fine piece of work.

As a former (albeit senile) employer of mine once said, "I saw a preview for a movie last night that just disgusted the hell out of me! It was for *The Bodyguard*, and Kevin Costner gets the hots for some monkey!" (Oh, bigoted senior citizens...ya gotta love 'em.)

How has Kevin erred? Let us count the ways...

1. Born in Los Angeles (1955).
2. Starred in *Chasing Dreams* (1981).
3. Starred in *Stacy's Knights* (1983).
4. Starred in *The Gunrunner* (1984).
5. Starred in *Shadows Run Black* (1984).
6. Starred in *Table for Five* (1985).
7. Starred in *Sizzle Beach U.S.A.* (1986).
8. Starred in *No Way Out* (1987).
9. Made out with Sean Young in *No Way Out*, an act looked upon with scorn and disdain by today's standards.
10. Starred in *Revenge* (1990).
11. Produced *Revenge*.
12. Starred in *Dances with Wolves* (1990).
13. Directed *Dances with Wolves*.
14. Produced *Dances with Wolves*.
15. Stole 1990 Best Director Oscar from Martin Scorsese for *Dances with Wolves*, a film of false sentiment, in which Kevin sports an unconvincing mustache and was too much of a wimp to ride his own horse at times.
16. Stole 1990 Best Picture Oscar from *GoodFellas* for *Dances with Wolves*, basically for saying nothing more than "I am kind to Indians."
17. Looked severely pissed when he failed to go 3-for-3 and lost the 1990 Best Actor Oscar for *Dances with Wolves* to a more deserving Jeremy Irons, who can fake an accent.
18. Further sodomized the masses with *Dances with Wolves* by schlepping it out at a discount price to holiday-time patrons of McDonald's with any sandwich purchase (1992).
19. Redefined "overkill" by adding an hour's worth of previously unseen footage to the network television premiere of *Dances with Wolves* (1993).
20. Told Madonna her concerts were "neat" in *Madonna: Truth or Dare* (1991).
21. Starred in *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991).
22. Mangled an English accent in *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*.
23. Bullied *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* director Kevin Reynolds, a former friend and early supporter of Costner, whom he directed in *Fandango*.
24. *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*, a pet project of Kevin's, unleashed on the world the sappy Bryan Adams ballad "(Everything I Do) I Do It for You," the only song heard on FM radio for the next 12 months.
25. Starred in *JFK* (1991).
26. Mangled a New Orleans accent in *JFK*.
27. Worked with Oliver Stone in *JFK*.
28. Starred in the first half of *The Bodyguard* (1992).
29. Starred in the second half of *The Bodyguard*.
30. Produced *The Bodyguard*.
31. Violated every haircut law known to man in *The Bodyguard*.
32. Worked with Whitney Houston in *The Bodyguard*.
33. *The Bodyguard*, a pet project of Kevin's, unleashed on the world the sappy Whitney Houston ballad "I Will Always Love You," the only song heard on FM radio for the next 18 months.
34. Despite the above, still thinks he's God's gift to us all.

• • •

Kevin will be seen in an underwater epic called *Waterworld*. Will it be better than the Patrick Duffy series *Man from Atlantis*? Only time will tell!

Between takes, Kevin berates all who dare oppose him.

Rosacea

Get It While It's Hot!

By Rod Lott

UNTREATED

TREATED

Your cheeks turn red. Your eyes feel gritty. You've been downing figs like there's no tomorrow.

Congratulations, you inflammed chap. You've got rosacea.

Not a sexually transmitted disease, but so widespread it might as well be, rosacea is a progressive skin condition that only recently has begun to invade that segment of the population known as the Baby Boom generation.

In fact, it is estimated that one in three Baby Boomers will contract the disease, which can lead to permanent facial and psychological damage — a fine payback as any for the people who turned into annoying yuppies. That's roughly 5 percent of America's population.

"Many people assume that rosacea is simply a complexion problem that will eventually go away, and do not realize that it may get worse without medical treatment and lifestyle modifications," Dr. Jonathan Wilkin, director of dermatology at Ohio State University, said. "The public needs to know the symptoms of rosacea and that medical therapy is available from physicians that can stop its progression and reverse its effects."

No one knows that more than "Karen Smith," 49, a salesperson who developed the disease in the 1980s.

"I always had great skin...no teenage acne," Smith said. "People would look at me and comment on how beautiful my skin was."

Of course, those times of praise came to an abrupt and bitter halt the day she noticed a dime-size pimple on her cheek. From then on, she was subjected to questions like, "Oh my goodness, what is *that* on your face?"

Thirty-two-year-old financial executive "Thomas Brown" had so much redness on his face his colleagues fingered a drinking problem, which, if you think about it, isn't too bad of a guess, considering rosacea's arguably most famous victim was screen comedian / drunkard W.C. Fields. Fields' bulbous rose-shaded probiscus can be attributed to rosacea and alcohol, which can aggravate the disease.

You would think most people might find peace of mind knowing that they share a disease with the *My Little Chickadee* star, but that apparently is far from the case.

To combat this national scourge, the National Rosacea Society has declared March "Rosacea Awareness Month." What this means is people who fear they have the disease can call up the rosacea hotline — (708) 382-8971 — and start getting the none-too-frequent *Rosacea Review* newsletter sent to their mailbox.

The long-term effects of the NRS' efforts to smack rosacea in the face are undeterminable at this point. However, it is safe to say that if the disease shows up as a sitcom subplot — perhaps most influential if afflicting Ted Wass, the dad on NBC's *Blossom* — rosacea suf-

ferers everywhere can breathe a collective sigh of relief, knowing their cause has been brought to the forefront of the American mind.

'Not a sexually transmitted disease, but so widespread it might as well be...'

The Warning Signs

- Your face gets red.
- Tiny blood vessels pop up.
- Your eyes feel gritty.
- Pimples galore!
- Your eyes go bloodshot.
- Inflammation of the skin grows increasingly severe.
- Your nose gets bumpy and swollen, as if stung by bees.
- And you could go blind, too.

Things to Avoid

Foods

- Liver
- Cheese (but cottage cheese OK)
- Soy sauce
- Yeast extract
- Eggplant
- Lima or navy beans
- Figs
- Spicy foods
- Foods high in histamine

Medical

- Frequent flushing
- Menopause
- Caffeine withdrawal syndrome
- Humid or cold weather
- Strong winds
- Hot baths
- Exercise

Famous Pimple Faces Throughout History

Though just a select few, these three men have stared deep into the eyes of the evil known as rosacea. Fields is perhaps the most famous rosacea case, with financier J.P. Morgan running a close second. The artist Ghirlandiao illustrated the disease in his circa-1480 painting *The Old Man and His Grandson*. The old man is on the right, holding his grandson, as yet unaffected by rosacea.

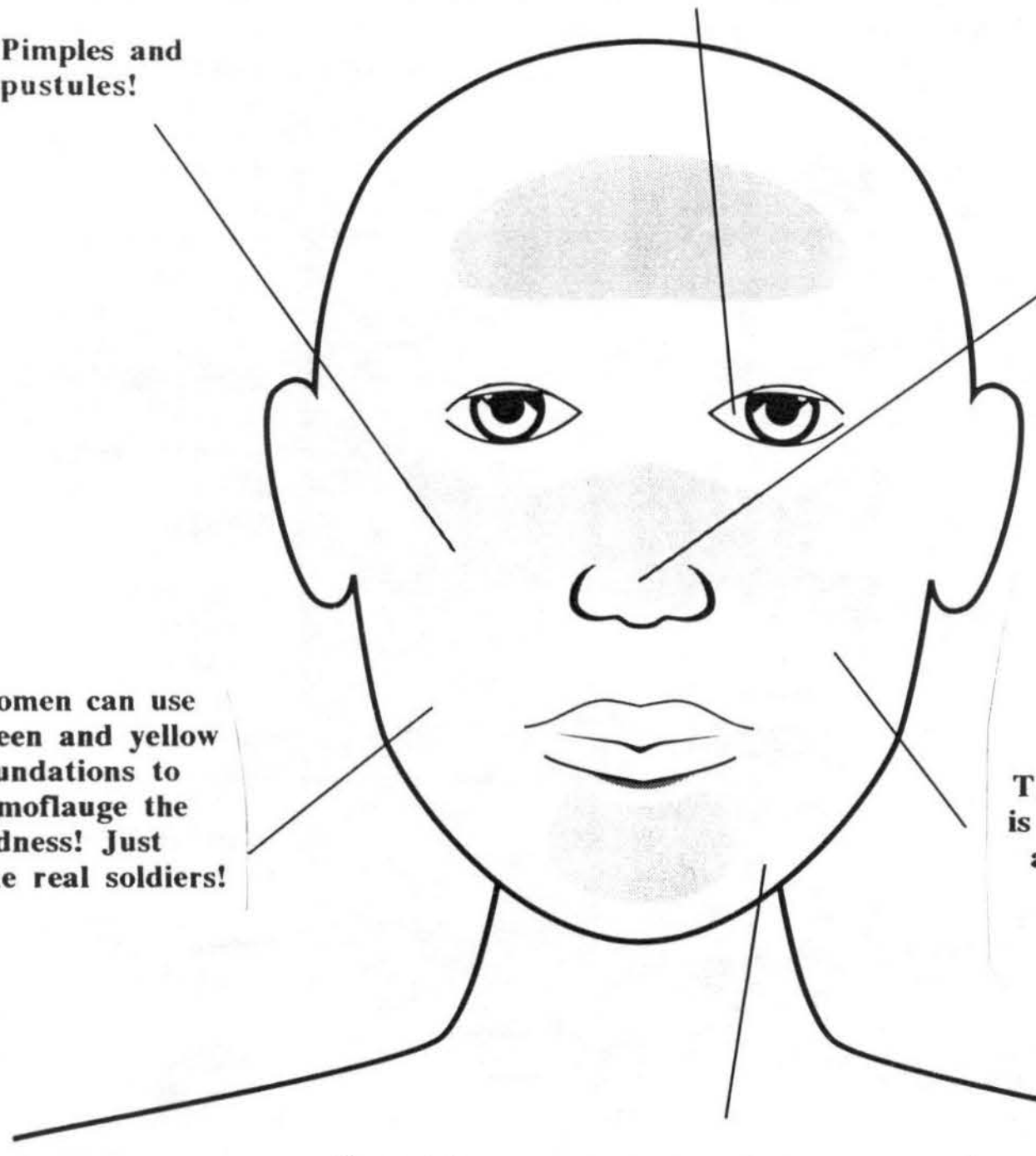
W.C. Fields, actor

J.P. Morgan, rich man

Old Man, painting

A HITCH Clip 'N Save Poster Feature!

Meet Mr. Inflammaface


Seeing red? That's normal! Your eyes will be irritated in varying degress!
Pimples and pustules!
Your nose will redden and swell to Santa-like proportions! There's always laser surgery!
Women can use green and yellow foundations to camoflauge the redness! Just like real soldiers!
The best defense is early diagnosis and treatment!
Controlling rosacea may require lifestyle changes, including foregoing the usual enchilada dinner! No foolin'!

HE-MAN ADVENTURE

ATTENTION RACE FANS!

Darryl Starbird and the He-man: A Battle of Cultures

By Rod Lott

You know the commercials: "RACE FANS! *RACE FANS!*" they scream, enticing you to run downtown for Darryl Starbird's National Rod and Custom Car Show and Monster Truck Races. But have you ever actually gone? Odds are, if you were able to read down this far, you have not.

And for that, you should be proud. Starbird's annual *soiree* (believe it or not, he's up to 36) is a highly disturbing event, suitable only for those who wish the State Fair also took place in the month of January.

My first thoughts upon entering the Myriad Convention Center Sunday afternoon were:

1. Gee, there sure are a lot of cars here.

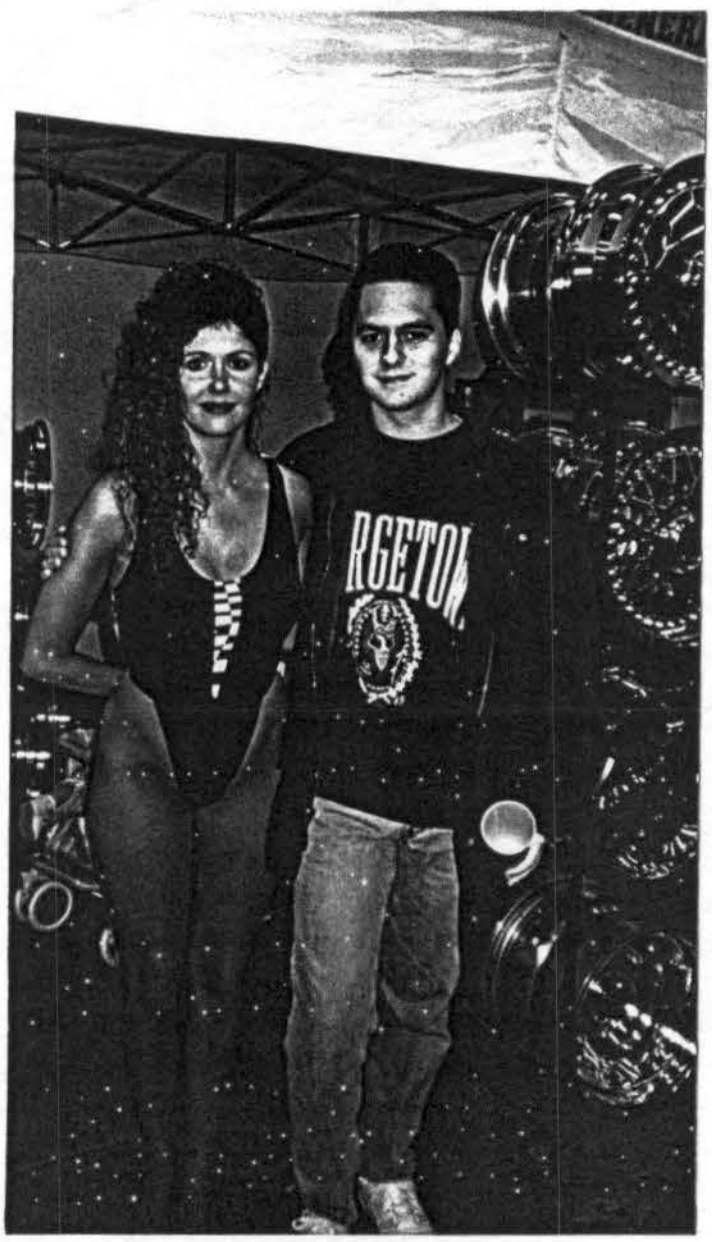
2. I want my money back.

This he-man felt completely out of place, as most of the crowd sported Garth Brooks hats and either red or green jeans. These are the kind of people whose sole knowledge of French culture is limited to the word "chassis." I'm pretty sure the entire population of Yukon, Okla. was there.

Looking at all the cars was rather repetitive, if not pointless; most had fuzzy dice dangling from the rear-view mirror. The owners were proud to let you know how much money they had invested in each vehicle (averaging $40,000) by posting the figures on a sign. However, it would seem to me that the car would be severely devalued by painting on the side of it, "Thanks Tina, Granny & Dixie."

A good portion of the cars had gimmicky names, like "Raisin' Hell," a purple truck on the bed of which stood an immaculate and impressive display of California Raisin figurines. Sitting next to a restored Volkswagen Bug was a can of oil which the owner had labeled in bright red letters, "OEL."

Of course, the big attraction was, as the TV ads boasted, "the Batmobile, from the *actual* movie!" (What movie, *Used People*?) Incidentally, you could take home a Polaroid of you and the Batmobile for *only* $5.



Rod chats with Beverly (left) in front of the mag wheels at the custom car show.

Surrounding the "over 500 exotic cars" were the vendors (sample name: Hawg Haven), selling everything from rusted license plates and "Bitch Parking Only" signs to "I've Fallen and I Can't Reach My Beer" T-shirts and custom-made plates reading "Kiss My Achy Breaky Butt!"

Also manning booths were Craftsman Tools, with a screwdriver blowout sale; Skoal, handing out smokeless tobacco samples as if the apocalypse was near; and MetroTech, demonstrating its commitment to post-high school education by dispensing helium balloons along with pamphlets heralding lucrative welding careers. The guy making submarine sandwiches was picking his teeth with his fingernail.

Providing "entertainment" was a country cover band named — if my eyes served me right — "Live & Kicken." They played horrible songs like "Achy Breaky Heart," which people actually listened and danced to.

Also providing entertainment were the swimsuit-clad women standing in front of cars — or, in the case of the one I spoke with — a wheel display. I had my picture taken with Beverly, the friendly model with one helluva meticulous bikini wax. It must be noted that Beverly was the only model: a) without cellulite, b) capable of phrasing a question in the form of a question, and c) able to spell her name, and correctly.

But the highlight of the day was the Calendar Girl Pageant, *hands down*. Ten contestants were brought out to parade about onstage to the tunes of Tom Cochrane and the like. I actually went to high school with one of the contestants, though I am certain she has undergone breast augmentation since those days. (And if she doesn't quit

Typical hick's idea of a funny gag: Fake hand under car, complete with beer and cig. Ha.

The real Batmobile. (Fake Batman.)

tanning so heavily, it's only a matter of months before she goes in for a skin graft.)

During the trying Q&A round, the emcee asked Tamara — who I'm sure is a table dancer somewhere within the metro area — whom she would most like to be for a day. She said, without hesitation, "Christie Brinkley."

"You're pretty sure of that, huh?" the emcee asked.

"Yeah," Tamara said. "Because she's beautiful and rich and famous."

Three Hooters girls watched the proceedings. A ponytailed man standing directly behind these behinds told his grade-school son, "Now there's the kind of girl you want to marry."

The next contestant was Tanya, a dead ringer for Chelsea Clinton. The emcee asked Tanya, "what was the one *thing* you've done in the past year that was most significant?"

Tanya, apparently having known the word "significant," answered, "I graduated from middle school."

After a quick judges' tally, the winners were named. To their credit, the judges picked the only three girls that didn't look like they were the progeny of squirrels. Tanya was not among the winners, and I think it's a bit unfair, because they asked her a question with a four-syllable word in it, and I fear it may have thrown her.

With hindsight, I think it says a lot about me that I ran into absolutely nobody I know. I spent two and a half hours there, and I count on my left hand the number of women there who could without a doubt be deemed both "women" and "attractive."

Experiences like these take years of therapy to shake, and I emerged smelling only faintly of cigarettes. I left just as the monster trucks began firing up (which was smart, as I value my hearing), with a heightened sense of knowing better and a hope that someone pointed Tanya the way to the MetroTech booth.

Top 10 Things Actually Overheard at Darryl Starbird's 36th Annual National Rod and Custom Car Show and Monster Truck Races (No Kidding)

10. "I'm so thirsty I could spit cotton!"
9. "Lookie there, it's Darryl! Right in front'a ya!"
8. "Fuckin' asshole!" (Said by a photographer trying to take a picture of a '25 T-bucket Roadster as someone strolled in front of him.
7. Son: "Look, Dad, it's just like yours!"
Dad: "No, this is a '*37*. Mine's a '*36*. Get it straight."
6. "Didja see that ZZ Top car? Man, I bet they can write that off as advertising."
5. "*That'd* be fun to work on!"
4. "Man, this bratwurst really *is* the best."
3. "Do you gotta color chart?"
2. "We come in on a chicken truck."
1. "If they're Calendar Girls, how come there's only 10 of 'em?"

VIDEO

The Need for Tweed

By Rod Lott

Despite — or maybe *because of* — their complete lack of substance, erotic thrillers on video continue to gain popularity and chalk up rental turns. Almost devoid of talent, plot and forward momentum, these bottom-shelvers nevertheless multiply as fast as the hunky stars they feature, seemingly existing only to show two naked bodies bumping and grinding.

We're not talking Hollywood features here, either. We're referring strictly to the independent straight-to-video fare.

Basic Instinct as high art? Compared to *Cold Sweat*, yes.

In exposing some recent B- and C-level erotic thrillers, we forego our usual five-star rating system in favor of a more appropriate sunblock rating system: The higher the flesh exposed by its female star, the stronger the sunblock needed (SPF-15). The more that stays covered, the less (SPF-2) needed to shield the body from those harmful ultra-violet rays.

Cold Sweat
(Paramount)
1994, R or NR
SPF-15

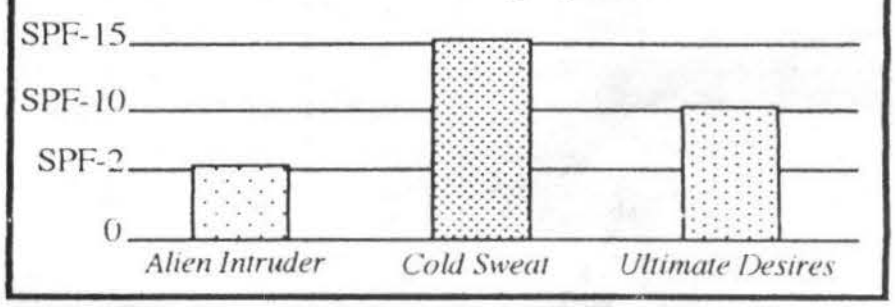
Shannon Tweed is the key to *Cold Sweat*'s appeal; without her, it may as well be *Melrose Place*.

Shannon stars as a woman married — inexplicably enough — to Dave Thomas (*SCTV*)! She doesn't have sex with him, however, because he is chubby and has bad hair. So she sleeps around with a couple of other guys. I don't know who or exactly how many, but Ben Cross from *Chariots of Fire* is in it, only he doesn't do any running here.

People try to kill other people and Shannon has lots of sex. Shannon does it in the shower (a scene which bests her "First we take off all our clothes and then we fuck our brains out" scene in 1984's *Hot Dog: The Movie*, which you liked so much in junior high), Shannon does it in the dark after getting glow-in-the-dark paint applied all over her, and a more conservative Shannon does it in a bed. Did I mention she does it in the shower?

Dave Thomas tries hard. The tape I saw was preceded by a trailer for *Coneheads*, which is kinda appropriate.

HITCH's Patented *Erotic Thriller* Sunblock Rating System



Shannie, get yer gun.

Ultimate Desires
(Prism)
1991, R
SPF-10

Alien Intruder
(PM Entertainment)
1993, R
SPF-2

Ah, Tracy Scoggins.

You knew her and loved her back in the '80s as Monica Colby on *Dynasty* and its sequel, *The Colbys*. Then she kinda disappeared for a long, looong time, surfacing for a moment in headlines after fending off a rapist. Now she's back, and in full force, shedding her clothes in just about every movie she appears in. She's also vamping it up (and showing a few wrinkles) on ABC's *Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*.

The Tracy Scoggins of old completely shed her image when she did that shower scene in *The Gumshoe Kid* opposite Jay Underwood (yes, yes, *The Boy Who Could Fly*). An incredible moment in cinematic history, Scoggins showed the world what was barely covered on prime-time TV. Rent this horrible film and ask yourself the question: Why can't I get Jay Underwood's jobs?

Scoggins: *Intruder* Alert!

Ultimate Desires is Scoggins' first full-fledged erotic thriller (*Gumshoe* was a moronic caper that had her dress up in clapper outfits and dance to ragtime). And sure, it sucks, too, save for a few choice minutes. The lovely Tracy plays Samantha. She's representing a high-class hooker. When her client is killed, she starts posing as a hooker to get to the bottom of things (literally).

Scoggins does a *Body Double*-sort of thing for a couple of voyeurs looking in her window, and then she has sex with *The Beastmaster* himself, Marc Singer, even though she doesn't know him and hates his guts. Nice, but underlit.

Alien Intruder is worse. Billy Dee Williams (that's right, Lando Calarissian) selects some space crew members for a special assignment: virtual reality. Tracy permeates each of their fantasies, becoming deadlier as they progress. It's kinda like *The Lawnmower Man* meets *Barberella*, I guess. Almost impossible to watch, Tracy does appear in a variety of sexy dresses and a tight swimsuit, but shows only a glimpse of skin during a strange scene with Maxwell Caulfield, her one-time *Colbys* co-star. (A bountiful blonde does step out of the shower, though, so your time's not a *total* loss.)

Speed Racer Trivia

Courtesy of FHE, test your *Speed Racer* know-how with this sextet of perplexing brain-ticklers:

1. What does the "G" on Speed Racer's shirt stand for?
2. What was the first pro race Speed entered?
3. What super-secret agency is Racer X a super-secret agent for?
4. What is the Mach-5's license plate number?
5. What does the "A" button on the Mach-5's steering wheel activate?
6. Where's Spridle and Chim Chim's favorite hiding place?

FUN FACT: A bendable Speed Racer figure can be yours for only $3.95! Call 1-800-326-1977 for details!

ANSWERS

1. "Go."
2. The Sword Mountain Race
3. Interpol
4. 21-2787
5. Auto Jacks
6. The Mach-5's trunk

Go, Speed Racer, Go to Video

By Rod Lott

Speed Racer: The Movie
(Family Home Entertainment)
1994, G, $19.95
★★★★★

I was just a third grader when Oklahoma City was changed forever with the appearance of three new channels to our television sets. Long before the days of cable, we had the big three networks and Channel 13, until the day Channels 25, 34 and 43 came to town.

All independent stations, they filled their schedules with grainy reruns, scratchy cartoons and Charles Bronson movies. My two little brothers rushed home after school every day and tuned in KGMC-34 to watch a little animated oddity from Japan called *Speed Racer*.

I hated it with all my heart. I thought it was the poorly made cartoon I'd ever laid eyes upon. I preferred the *Super Friends*.

Nearly a decade and a half later, Family Home Entertainment has released *Speed Racer: The Movie*. It seems that in between now and then, Speed has become quite a cult phenomenon, with reruns currently playing nightly on MTV. This "movie," which had a revival-type theatrical run last year, is actually two classic episodes of *Speed Racer*, interspersed with an episode of the long-forgotten '60s spacetoon "Colonel Bleep" and four vintage animated TV commercials, including a bug spray ad and a PSA starring Smokey the Bear. It even comes with a free decoder watch.

I love it all to death. I think it's the most thoroughly watchable and repeatable G-rated feature.

Granted, nothing on the surface has changed. The animation is still as wobbly as Nancy Kerrigan's knee on Jan. 6, but the show is charged with a sense of camp that flies over the heads of young viewers. It is by far *the* tape of the year.

The adventure begins when Speed lets his gal pal Trixie take over the wheel of the Mach-5 and they are harassed on the road by a carful of hooligans. Things change, however, when the gang recognize Speed and he kicks some butt. Meanwhile, Trixie befriends a girl whose father won't allow her to ride in cars. He galavants across town on a horse, and when he sees his precious daughter taking the Mach-5 for a test drive, he goes nuts and begins to hit the souped-up vehicle with his whip!

"All cars are weapons are wheels!" he cries. *"I hate them!"*

The rest of the story involves the girl's efforts to win her father's favor again and to accept the fact that present day isn't the Old West.

The second half of the film is another classic Speed adventure, this one concerning a big race. Speed is naturally up against some baddies, but is aided along the way by the cool-costumed Racer X, who the narrator tells us at least four times is Speed's mystery brother. Needless to say, all goes fine and the monkey and kid play stowaway.

Scattered about all the craziness are the aforementioned ads and Colonel Bleep short, plus a music video featuring a dance remix of the *Speed Racer* theme. There's also an explanation of the Mach-5's secret steering controls.

You simply must have this tape. *Speed Racer: The Movie* is way cool.

(FHE has also released four classic volumes of the perennial TV fave: *Race Against Time*, *The Great Plan*, *The Secret Engine* and *The Fastest Car on Earth*, all for only $12.98 each. Haven't seen any of 'em. I'll stick with the movie, but thought you might like to know.)

Code Schmode

The free yellow-and-black-banded decoder watch that comes packaged with all copies of *Speed Racer: The Movie* is apt to break within a year, and it only decodes one message, presented at the first of the tape. Sending the secret word back on a postcard will get you a pit crew pass, an autographed photograph of all the gang *and* a blueprint of the Mach 5, *all for free*.

But if you rent the tape, you won't have a watch to decode the all-elusive "for your eyes only" message and, therefore, no goodies. No worry. The code reads A=P, B=R, C=S, D=D, E=L, F=I, G=E, H=M, I=X and J=Y. The coded message is CABFDEG. Decoded, that becomes SPRIDLE.

Spridle, of course, is Speed's pesky little brother, a capped menace in red overalls who has a penchant for jumping into trunks with a monkey.

So scrawl SPRIDLE on a postcard along with your name, address and phone number, and send it to: Speed Racer Fan Club, 100 Fusion Way, Country Club Hills, IL. 60478. The free stuff should arrive at your door via Mr. Postman, without having to part with $19.95 to get 'em. You're welcome.

—Rod Lott

The Men Who Would Be KING FAISAL

By Rod Lott

SAUDI ARABIA — Winners for 1994's 17th annual King Faisal International Prizes — Saudi Arabia's equivalent of the Oscars, we're sure — were announced in February. This comes as a surprise to all of us who thought the nominations were *just yesterday!* Yet how quickly time goes when you're waiting to see if Professor Wadad Afif Al-Kadi will pull through and clinch the prize in the Arabic Literature category.

And she did! Al-Kadi won in recognition of "her extraordinary contributions in authenticating documents, letters and essays of ancient Arabic prose." Al-Kadi actually shares this year's Arabic Literature award with Professor Aisha Abdul Rahman, expert of not only ancient Arabic prose, but Islamic studies as well.

Another tie existed in the Islamic Studies category, with the award going to Egypt's Sheikh El-Said Sabiq Mohammed Et-Tihami and Qatar's Professor Sheikh Yusuf Abdullah Al-Qaradhawi. With both taking nods for studying Islamic law, Sheikh Et-Tihami won for his book *Fiqh As-Sunna*; Sheikh Al-Qaradhawi for his book *Fiqh Az-Zakat*. Despite the international influence of the awards, both *Fiqh As-Sunna* and *Fiqh Az-Zakat* continue, at this writing, to be bested on American best-seller lists by Howard Stern's *Private Parts*.

In the category of Service to Islam, the prize went to (as expected) His Eminence Sheikh Mohammed bin Saleh Al-Uthaimin of Saudi Arabia, professor at Riyadh's Imam Mohammed bin Saud Islamic University and member of the High Committee of the Ulama'a.

'Despite the international influence of the awards, both *Fiqh As-Sunna* and *Fiqh Az-Zakat* continue, at this writing, to be bested on American best-seller lists by Howard Stern's *Private Parts*.'

Other winners were Professor Dennis Parnell Sullivan for Science — Mathematics, and Professors William French Anderson and Robert Williamson for Medicine — Medical Applications of Genetic Engineering.

Sullivan is a geometry aficionado. Williamson, of course, clinched his honor by discovering the gene responsible for Thalassemia A. Anderson is known for a 1990 incident in which he infused gene-corrected T-lymphocytes into a 4-year-old girl, which I thought was illegal in these states.

Since its inception in 1979, the King Faisal International Prize has been awarded to 87 individuals from 27 different countries. Winners are awarded a handsome gold medallion suitable for displaying around his or her neck, along with a cash endowment of SR350,000. For an American, it's worth $93,333 in United States currency and a possible mention in *The New York Times*, provided it's a slow news day.

The prize is named after HM King Faisal ibn Abdul Aziz, son of the founder of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom's third monarch, who ruled from 1964 until he died in 1975.

Those who wish to add a King Faisal award to their mantles, be advised of the categories for the 1995 competition:

- Islamic Studies — Studies Dealing with Thematic Commentary of the Holy Qur'an
- Arabic Literature — Studies Dealing with Prominent Men of Letters in Modern American Literature
- Science — Chemistry
- Mathematics — Molecular Immunology

No farther specifications are offered, so there is no knowing as of yet whether or not that old book report you wrote in grade school over *Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves* is eligible for the Arabic Literature category.

Past medicinal winners of particular note include: Dr. Wallace Peters (malaria, 1983), Drs. John S. Fordtran, William Greenough III, Michael Field and Gerd Binnig (diarrheal diseases, 1984), Professor Barrie Rus-sell Jones (blindness, 1987), Professor Andre Capron and Dr. Anthony Edward Butterworth (schistosomiasis, 1990).

Anyone who can define schistosomiasis deserves such an award.

The Winners' Circle

(top row, L-R) Prof. Dennis Parnell Sullivan, Prof. Aisha Abdul Rahman (Bint El-Shati), Prof. Wadad Afif Al-Kadi. (bottom row, L-R) Prof. William French Anderson, Prof. Robert Williamson, Prof. Sheikh Yusuf Abdallah El-Qardhawi, Sheikh El-Said Sabiq Mohammad Et-Tihami. Note Sheikh Et-Tihami's uncanny resemblance to almost the entire cast of *Planet of the Apes*.

Uncle Buck for King Faisal '95

Although the King Faisal International Prize is usually awarded to those who have made great strides in contemporary mathematics and gene therapy, we feel one recently deceased man is worthy of earning a posthumous prize in the 1995 awards. Let us not forget rotund actor John Candy, who died of a heart attack March 4. Though Candy probably never picked up a book on Islamic law in his 40-plus years of life, we at **HITCH** deem him the ideal candidate to be honored by the King Faisal Foundation for his outstanding contributions to popular culture.

But since popular culture is not an eligible category in the '95 running, we nominate him in the field of Medicine—Molecular Immunology, which is. He merits the honor primarily for two reasons, both of which directly relate to Saudi Arabia, home of the King Faisal Foundation:

1. Although we have no proof, we are sure *Uncle Buck* has been properly subtitled for viewing in Saudi Arabia.

2. He provided many laughs in 1989's *Speed Zone*, in which Jamie Farr played an Arab.

Do your part in seeing John Candy gets his due by filling out, clipping and then sending the nomination form below to the King Faisal HQ. A win for Candy would be redemption for the sins of *Who's Harry Crumb?*

—Rod Lott

Dear King Faisal Nomination People:

I hereby nominate dead American film star John Candy for recognition in the 1995 King Faisal International Prizes in the category of Medicine — Molecular Immunology. He was a true humanitarian and had a funny skiing scene in *The Great Outdoors*.

Signed, _____

_____

_____

_____

King Faisal
Foundation

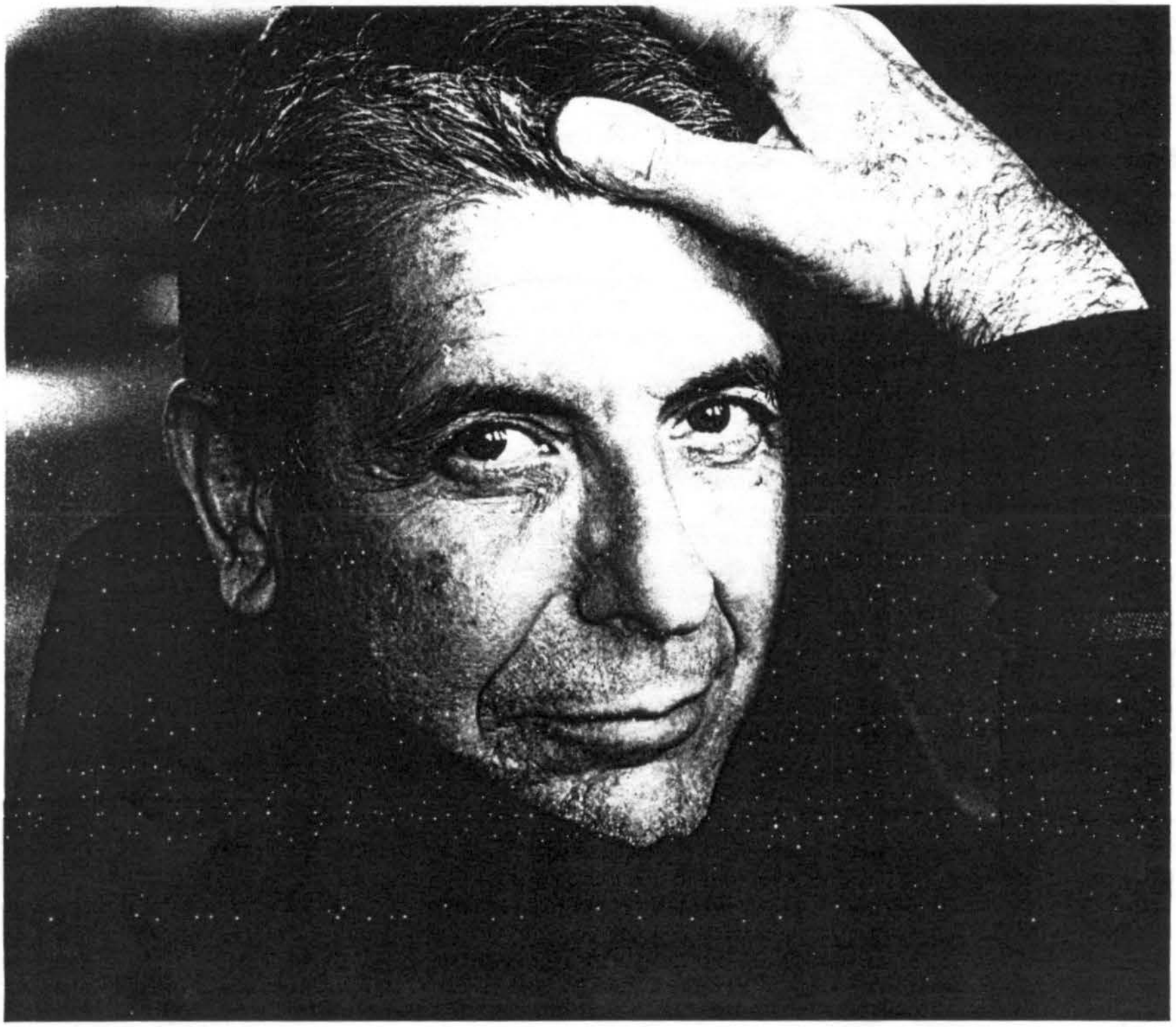
P.O. Box 352
Riyadh 11411

Saudi Arabia

Leonard Cohen

THE KING OF PAIN

"Whatever brings two people together, you can call it love."



Interview by Rod Lott

"I think the problem is that it isn't really appropriate for me to be popular here."

Even with 11 albums and four books behind him, singer / songwriter Leonard Cohen remains very much a mystery.

Looked upon by both his contemporaries and peers as saintly, the 58-year-old Montreal native holds a name not recognized by most Americans. During the '60s, Cohen was considered an underground icon; today he is a father figure, albeit an absentee father, since mainstream acceptance has forever eluded him, even after a late '80s appearance on *Miami Vice*.

Perhaps that is fitting for a man whose songs do not exactly leak sunshine, for Cohen is a master of the morose. And then there's That Voice, which readily conjures up images of sitting in a Holiday Inn lounge swirling with cigar smoke. Though far from radio-friendly, it speaks more truths than any artist in memory.

This year finds Cohen at a pivotal point in his career, with the release of his brilliant four-star album *The Future*. The ever-elusive man is giving interviews, circuiting the talk shows and even showing up at the Oscars on the arm of his companion, actress Rebecca DeMornay.

Surprisingly, for a man who has been considered a legend for decades, Leonard Cohen is human. As I prepared to interview him, I felt incredibly intimidated, expecting a half-hour chat with a pretentious, pompous poet. He was anything but, treating me as if we were old friends.

When I called Cohen at his Los Angeles home, he was busy with his Canon color copier, reversing the colors on some of his drawings. "They're beautiful," he said, beaming over his art.

Ladies and gentleman, Mr. Leonard Cohen. What follows is but a brief introduction.

HITCH: It's interesting that they have a Leonard Cohen festival every year in Poland and you have No. 1 hits consistently in Europe, but you're not commercially successful here in America. Why is that?

Cohen: Search me. I think the problem is that it isn't really appropriate for me to be popular here.

HITCH: How do you mean?

Cohen: Somewhere, somehow in the back rooms of the record companies a long time ago, it was decided that I was not a mainstream artist.

HITCH: *Entertainment Weekly* said you were "the next-best thing to God." Do you agree?

Cohen: No! I think that's blasphemous! I mean, what commandment is it, thou shalt not use the Lord's name in vain?

HITCH: Or thou shalt not worship false idols?

Cohen: Exactly. It didn't offend me, but I think it's blasphemous. You certainly don't want to hype yourself in that manner.

HITCH: With the recent tribute album to you (*I'm Your Fan*, with covers by R.E.M., Pixies, among others), I'm curious to know, whom do you admire?

Cohen: Well, there's a saying in the Talmud, "Good wine is in every generation." There's a lot of the older pioneers who are still out there, like Chuck Berry. Then you have the next generation with Neil Young, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins. One more generation, you have Don Henley and Elvis Costello, down to today, you have Depeche Mode and Mother Love Bone. Plus, there's the perennials like Dylan, Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Eric Clapton. In this world, there are many great religious figures and newspaper men and musicians, all around the world vast and wide and filled with excellence.

HITCH: Are you familiar with John Wesley Harding's song "Bastard Son?" He pays tribute to you in it.

Cohen: Oh, really? What does he say?

HITCH: Well, the premise is he's the bastard son of Bob Dylan and Joan Baez, but then he goes on to say that you're his uncle and the lyrics go, "Uncle Leonard used to make me laugh / Took my nightmares and tore my daydreams in half / Showed them to me reflected upside-down / In a mirror that Suzanne Vega found / Well, Leonard's still doing his tricks today / It only goes to show that growing up might pay."

Cohen: (laughs) That is very, very nice. Do you know him?

HITCH: No. I wish.

Cohen: I was going to say, send him my regards.

HITCH: How does it feel, to be immortalized in such a way?

Cohen: It's very nice. I was inspired by Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Wordsworth and Yeats and their ideas filtered down to me. You receive from them. I'm happy the same is happening with me.

HITCH: On your recent Letterman appearance, the lyrics of "The Future" were changed from "Give me crack and anal sex" to "Give me speed and careless sex." Were you forced to change them?

Cohen: Oh, no, no. That was a bit of self-censorship on my part. I was not asked to change it, though. I feel every artist has the right to practice appropriate behavior.

HITCH: Did you think the audience wouldn't see the irony in those lines?

Cohen: I cut the song because I didn't feel comfortable singing that part on national TV. Singing it on a record is a different story. A record is very individual, in that you know who Leonard Cohen is and that you're going to be taken on a certain kind of ride, and there I can say whatever I want to the people because they invited me into their homes. But when someone turns on the TV, they're not inviting you into their homes. They deserve to have a kind of peacefulness that networks promise. But I think that what I sang was a pretty good,

close paraphrase. I mean, crack and speed, they're the same thing essentially. It's not like I sang, "Give me Sunday school and McDonald's."

HITCH: The lyrics of "Light as the Breeze" are decidedly sexual. What, in your opinion, is the difference between sex and love?

Cohen: There is no difference. None at all. They're all aspects of love and the unbearable, irresistible attraction between a man and a woman. There are so many alterations, modifications of the kinds of expression of the inevitable and the urgent. Whatever brings two people together, you can call it love. But love is sex and sex is love.

HITCH: That's interesting.

Cohen: I'm moving outside to my hammock in the backyard....Oh, *man*, this is *good*.

HITCH: Nice out?

Cohen: Beautiful.

HITCH: Are you ever going to write another novel?

Cohen: Well, the devil laughs when we make plans, but yes, I'd like to.

HITCH: That's what I'd like to do myself.

Cohen: Oh, really? Well, there's only one way to do it.

HITCH: What's that?

Cohen: Blacken the pages.

HITCH: Got it. The title of your new album is *The Future*. So what does the future hold for us?

Cohen: Well, it's a good title and these songs are what the future draws. These are cries the future summons, demands. I don't pretend, especially lying here in my hammock under my infertile orange tree, to have a special grasp on the future. But over the years, my songs, as it turns out, have had mild prophetic aspects to them. Today I think we are in the middle of an interior flood, and we must discover what is appropriate behavior in a catastrophe. In the future, we'll be finding more and more invitations to acknowledge our situation, and it is extreme, urgent, dangerous.

"I believe it is in the darkest moments that the light manifests."

HITCH: At the same time, there's a lyric in "Anthem" which is comforting and hopeful that says, "There's a crack in everything / That's how the light gets through."

THE FUTURE

Cohen: Yes, that is the metaphysical background to the whole album. I believe it is in the darkest moments that the light manifests. There we are forced to reconsider humanity, reinvent, rediscover, renew this spirit called the soul, which is the only discovery worth anything at all.

HITCH: In all the pictures I've seen of you, why aren't you smiling?

Cohen: Hmmm...I don't know. For one thing, I'm often depressed, but I'm not so much anymore, so maybe I should start smiling.

HITCH: Why were you depressed?

Cohen: I think maybe the level of serotonin in the blood. Now I'm convinced it was a chemical imbalance.

HITCH: What has changed in your life that's made you happy?

Cohen: Well, they say as you get older, the brain cells that generate anxiety die off, but I don't know.

HITCH: I have to ask you one obligatory Rebecca DeMornay question. Did you ever see *The Slugger's Wife*?

Cohen: (groans) That was a regrettable experience from her point of view. I first saw it on an airplane long before I knew Rebecca and my only thought was, "Jesus, they're using a song I wrote a melody for. I wonder if I'm going to get paid." I think Rebecca's one of the most underrated and underestimated actresses in this country. She should have been nominated for an Oscar for *The Hand That Rocks the Cradle*.

HITCH: You're respected and revered by everyone in the music industry. I hesitate to use the word "worshipped," but it's true. You've influenced everybody and they all look up to you as this all-seeing, all-knowing prophet. So to close, I'd like to ask you a question one might ask a prophet, and that is, how do I win the love of a woman?

Cohen: You have to die for her.

HITCH: That's it?

Cohen: That's all, and you'll be busy enough doing that, so I don't want to complicate your other strategies. Do you have someone in mind?

HITCH: Oh, yeah. I always do.

Cohen: Well, surrender and die and you will have her.

Spin Again

Music you may have missed

CD Reviews by ROB COLLINS and ROD LOTT

Violent Femmes
Add It Up (1981-1993)
(Slash / Reprise)
★★★★★

For their sixth album, the Violent Femmes, the longtime college fave trio from Milwaukee, has lovingly assembled what must be one of the greatest retrospectives ever: There's 72 minutes of greatest hits, unreleased demos, alternate takes, B-sides, live performances recorded without the band's knowledge, as well as an answering machine message, a radio spot and an introduction by an all-too-drunk emcee.

Add It Up (1981-1993) covers Gordon Gano and Co. from their earliest work ("Blister in the Sun") to their latest, an all-new recording of "I Held Her in My Arms," a three-minute wonder of relentless pop, first cooked to perfection on 1986's *The Blind Leading the Naked*. "36-24-36" is the title track to a movie that was never made, and "Country Death Song" is just that: hillbilly punk, in addition to being a classic of comic subversion.

The one notable exception is the Femmes' cover of Culture Club's "Do You Really Want to Hurt Me?" from their last studio album, 1991's *Why Do Birds Sing?*, a song which ideally captures the band's sarcastic free spirit.

With material spanning a dozen years, we're allowed to witness the band's maturity not only musically, but emotionally as well, as they shed their party-boy sensibilities of the likes of 1981's "Gimme the Car" (*"I'm gonna get her real high"*) in favor of — *yipes!* — adulthood (*"Did you do too many drugs? / I did too many drugs"*), as in 1991's "American Music," a true anthem if there ever was one.

This album is a must, and proof the Femmes are timeless. It'll put a smile on your face that not even the years are capable of removing.

—Rod Lott

Femmes leader Gordon Gano (above) and 1/2 of The Ocean Blue (right).

The Ocean Blue
Beneath the Rhythm and Sound
(Sire / Reprise)
★★★★☆

On its third effort, the Pennsylvania quartet delivers more of the same (pretentious title aside)...and thank goodness.

As the name would suggest, The Ocean Blue's sound is a wave of rich, finely textured melodies. All 11 songs here are cut from the same ethereal mold as both their great previous outings. "Sublime" is a standout, with its catchy, drawn-out refrain, but then, what song here isn't?

While none can quite reach the choral majesty of the 1989 cut "Drifting, Falling," B*eneath*'s tunes all merit repeat plays. A plus here is the return of Steve Lau's sax; all but absent from 1991's *Cerulean*, it's a crucial key to the band's distinctively cool flavor. Atmosphere is big with the group, and all three albums create sailing images of the cold of crisp, winter mornings. *Beneath the Rhythm and Sound* has arrived in stores just in time for such melancholy days.

—Rod Lott

Loudon Wainwright III
Career Moves
(Charisma / Virgin)
★★★★☆

It's hard to believe Loudon Wainwright III is celebrating 25 years of orneriness this year. It seems like only yesterday when the singer-songwriter had a minor hit with "Dead Skunk." *Career Moves*, his 14th album, provides a generous overview of the witty songsmith's catalog.

Loudon, who fits somewhat into the John Prine niche, recorded the album for his silver jubilee at the Bottom Line in New York City, and it's typical stuff — Wainwright's neurotically correct songs accompanied by acoustic guitar, along with musicians Chaim Tannenbaum and David Mansfield backing him up.

Career Moves houses a few surprises, including the tongue-in-cheek "I'd Rather Be Lonely" from the recent *History* album and six brand-new tunes. More than an "unplugged" album, *Career Moves* provides an opportunity to experience the improvised wit of one of America's most sarcastic minds — without having to fight the crowds.

—Rob Collins

Big Star
Columbia: Live at Missouri University 4/25/93
(Zoo)
★★★★☆

The obscure yet legendary and largely influential Big Star, defunct for some years, jumped back onstage for a college concert this spring. Some very intelligent person at Zoo Records had the idea to record it, and thus, deserves a hefty raise.

While his finest hour remains as "The Letter" during his Box Tops days, the melodies of Alex Chilton still pour down your ears like syrup, and sound even more alive when played live. I have this tape in my car; now I find myself making excuses to drive.

—Rod Lott

Cracker
Kerosene Hat
(Virgin)
★★★★☆

When ex-Camper Van Beethoven frontman David Lowery debuted with Cracker two years ago, the self-titled album was met with skepticism and scorn. While the disc housed the catchy "Teen Angst" single, the LP lacked cohesion as a whole. The follow-up, *Kerosene Hat*, is much more than a sequel.

Lowery returns with guitar in hand — and tongue in cheek — alongside country guitarist Johnny Hickman (who has jammed with the likes of Willie Nelson) to create a respectable twang *a la Sticky Fingers*. The album's countrified tendencies can be linked to producer Don Smith (Traveling Wilburys) and the makeshift recording studio in Pioneertown, Calif., a city built as a set for films such as *High Noon* and *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*.

High points include Jayne Mansfield references ("Movie Star"), a Jerry Garcia cover ("Loser") and the self-explanatory "Take Me Down to the Infirmary." *Kerosene Hat* also has three mysteriously untitled bonus songs, including an incredible epic tracking in at #69.

—Rob Collins

The Juliana Hatfield Three
Become What You Are
(Atlantic / Mammoth)
★★★☆☆

Ex-Blake Baby Juliana Hatfield has forsaken her solo moniker for The Juliana Hatfield Three, a name which marks her new — and apparently permanent — band of bassist Dave Fisher and Todd Philips on drums. While Juliana's plaintive vocals are mixed to the forefront for her first Atlantic release, R.E.M. producer Scott Litt has beefed up her guitars for *Become What You Are*.

The album starts out respectably with self-conscious ditties like "Supermodel" and "My Sister," but the consistency of the entire thing runs thin by the disc's end. Sure, there are enough indie-popisms to satisfy the hungry, but the whole of *Become What You Are* falls short of becoming what could have been.

—Rob Collins

The Mighty Mighty Bosstones
Don't Know How to Party
(Mercury)
★★★☆☆

Mixing an unlikely brew of rock, punk and ska, the Bosstones are an all-out force who know not the meaning of the word "control." In some cases, that works to their benefit; sometimes, it doesn't.

The songs on *Don't Know How to Party* are an eclectic collection of rants and raves, sung mostly with a scream by

Alex Chilton, Jody Stephens and Ken Stringfellow: And they're gonna be Big Star.

lead vocalist Dicky Barrett, who, it seems, gargles with gravel.

The title cut sums up the band's self-mocking attitude, but the tune that follows — "Someday I Suppose" — is an absolute anthem. With intentionally tongue-in-cheek lyrics like *"When I can't remember it irritates me / Could be I can't remember, could be I choose to not / Let's move along the song and try to find a plot"* and an equal mix of thrashing guitars and big band trumpets, the 'Tones have captured the heart of this lazy soul. A more than fine disc for a major-label debut. Also check out the EP *Ska-Core, the Devil and More*. Fun, fun, fun 'til your daddy takes the CD player away.

But trumpets? Don't worry; they rock.

—Rod Lott

Bob Bob Bob
England's Newest Hit-Maker!
(Bob Bob Bob Records)

★★★★☆

Discovered early this year in New York by mustachioed thespian Tom Selleck (*Folks!*), Bob Bob Bob is a man on the verge of overtaking America with his superior grasp on societal nuts and bolts. As he sings on the cut "Angst! Angst!! Angst!!! (Dark Clothing)," *"I know something that you don't know and I'm not going to tell ya."*

Here in his relatively acoustic 18-song debut, the reclusive Bob^3 examines many aspects of life as we know it; in particular, why he'd rather be a monkey than Tarzan, dogs with uncontrollable bladders, woofle ball and the undeniable deity-like influence of not-so-mustachioed thespian Ralph Macchio on our daily lives.

Packed with surprises and peppered with cheesy snaps, *England's Newest Hit-Maker!* could be the most socially important album since *We Are the World* (a sample of Bob^3's views: Keith Richards, good; Eric Clapton, bad). Not only fun ("Hey! [Hey, Hey]"), but darned educational, too ("How to Make Delicious Tea")!

Available only through Bob Bob Bob himself, 164 E. 7th St., Suite #2-R, New York, NY 10009.

—Rod Lott

Bob.

Garth Brooks
In Pieces
(Liberty)
☆☆☆☆☆

Haven't heard it. Don't wanna. The man is evil.

—Rod Lott

Various Artists
Commemorativo: A Tribute to Gram Parsons
(Rhino)
★★★☆☆

When former Byrd / Flying Burrito Brother Gram Parsons died mysteriously at the Joshua Tree Inn in 1973, the sad-eyed songman became an inevitable martyr. Like his idol Hank Williams, Parsons never saw his 30th birthday. Most of Parsons' self-described "Cosmic American Music" missed the mainstream.

Thankfully, the folks at Rhino Records have released a tribute album in his honor. Compiled by Italy's Cyclope Records, *Commemorativo: A Tribute to Gram Parsons* eulogizes Parsons' legacy via 17 covers by modern musicians.

A few of the renditions hit right on the money. dB's crony Peter Holsapple, who occasionally moonlights with R.E.M., flirts with brilliance on an up tempo, live version of "A Song for You," with Susan Cowsill subbing for Emmylou Harris. St. Louis' Uncle Tupelo also delivers with characteristic spunk on "Sad Eyes," a song recorded by Parsons' International Submarine Band. Slowed down from the original, Uncle Tupelo's take features Jay Farrar's southern drawl and Brian Henneman's slide playing.

But *Commemorativo* lacks consistency. Former Dream Syndicate and current Gumball member Steve Wynn sounds as annoying as a Dylan impersonator on "Devil in Disguise (Christine's Tune)." And "The New Soft Shoe" by Gram's daughter Polly is rock-lite — and nepotism — at its most shameful.

Like Parsons' untimely demise, the majority of this tribute album falls criminally short of the possibilities. However, *Commemorativo* might introduce country-rock's forefather to few kind ears.

—Rob Collins

Matthew Sweet
Altered Beast
(Zoo)
★★★☆☆

1990's *Girlfriend* was a near-perfect bubble gum concoction for people who hate bubble gum. On this, his fourth outing, Sweet seems to want to distance himself from the sound that finally got him noticed. The result is near-grunge.

Yesiree, Sweet's teetering toward hardcore, so far as to include an audio bite from the big-budget porno *Caligula* and utter "fuck" a couple of times. One gets the feeling he's done the dirty sound not because he wanted to, but because he *felt* he *had* to. Still, Sweet's gift for melodies shines through on most every cut — standouts include "Someone to Pull the Trigger," "In Too Deep" and "Reaching Out" — and you really can't argue with a burgeoning genius.

—Rod Lott

Inner Circle
Bad Boys
(Big Beat / Atlantic)
★★★☆☆

What Black 47 is to Celtic pop and Goober & the Peas are to countrified rock, Inner Circle is to reggae. Making their music more accessible to the masses while remaining true to their roots, the group has much of America skankin' to the beat of the title cut, a.k.a. the theme to Fox's *Cops*. Almost as catchy is the suggestive fun of "Sweat (A La La La La Long)." The Neil Young cover (!) won't embarrass you, either.

Some of the tracks, however, are a bit too ignorant of the band's origins; "Wrapped Up in Your Love" is a razor's edge away from Michael Bolton, but with a Jamaican-friendly tempo. Despite this (and an uncalled-for remix or two), an ideal disc for the sweltering summer heat.

—Bob Clipson

Matthew Sweet: *Beast* of Burden

John Wesley Harding
Pett Levels: The Summer EP
(Sire / Warner)
★★★★★

Though only a five-song disc, *Pett Levels* is among Wes' finest work since his 1990 debut, *Here Comes the Groom*. His second in a promised series of loosely themed EPs — the first being *God Made Me Do It: The Christmas EP* — the fun kicks off with the buoyant "Summer Single," which is anything but, and that's the point. Wes is a master of sly, sardonic subversion, and pokes fun of his subject before paying tribute to it, bursting into a Trashmen-esque jam *a la* sun 'n surf only after getting his barbs in first.

Also included are the explosive "One Shot," an acoustic version of *Groom*'s "When the Sun Comes Out" and an excellent, weeping acoustic-driven duet with David Lewis, entitled "The End of Something."

Long ignored, Wes' talent rises higher than most. The fact that he remains in obscurity is quite criminal. You'll be hard pressed to find something this solid in '94, and it came out in late '93.

—Rod Lott

Original Motion Picture Soundtrack
So I Married an Axe Murderer
(Chaos / Columbia)
★★☆☆☆

Supposedly better than the movie, and in that case, I'm glad I missed it. This soundtrack to the recent Mike Myers flop kicks off with The Boo Radleys' jubilant remake of "There She Goes" and ends with The La's original, one of the more memorable pop ditties of my college days.

Everything else in between, however, is spotty at best. Haven't we heard the Spin Doctors' "Two Princes" three billion times already? How many of us want to hear extended versions of Big Audio Dynamite II's already overlong tunes? And who in the hell asked for a poetry reading by Myers himself (*besides* Myers)?

You'll enjoy every minute, if you're into that whole Ned the Atomic Dustbin kinda thing. I'm not.

—Rod Lott

Nancy Travis is a murderess and Mike Myers the man who put his own poetry reading on the *So I Married an Axe Murderer* soundtrack.

The bad boys of Inner Circle are (L-R) Roger Lewis, Lancelot Hall, Calton Coffie, Touter Harvey and Ian Lewis.

VIVARIN AND YOU

To Sleep, Perchance to Vomit

By Rod Lott

If the higher-ups at SmithKline Beecham have their way, the whole college-going nation soon will be on a first-name basis with "the wham-bam late-night-cram to-ace-the-exam study partner."

We're talking Vivarin of course, that friendly "alertness aid" loaded with caffeine. They're little, yellow and difficult.

University campuses nationwide are being bombarded by an ad campaign for the over-the-counter drug with the slogan, "Looks like a Vivarin night," which urges students to pop a few during exam time. Says Vivarin brand manager Debbie Weis, "With this new campaign, we wanted to show college students that we know what kind of pressure they're under during exam week, and make them aware that Vivarin is there to help."

Well, halle-*freakin'*-lujah. To kick off this brazen and bold campaign, they sent each targeted school a wheelbarrow full of free samples, which they encouraged us to distribute amongst the students. (Can you say Soylent Green?)

At my school, I was given them all. Yessiree, I held in my hands enough Stimucin® to subdue and flatline Roseanne *and* Tom Arnold. My mission — should I choose to accept it — was to take six Vivarins and write an article about the experience.

Since taking six tablets would be the caffeine equivalent of 12 cups of coffee, I decided to take only two. (Also, if I had taken six, all my sentences would have looked a little something like this: aklqståœ"´≤dik.jp√q3.)

According to the package, Vivarin "helps restore mental alertness or wakefulness when experiencing fatigue or drowsiness." *Wrong*. What it actually does is make you jumpy as hell. You'll find yourself tapping your feet at unbelievable speeds, and you won't be able to stop. You'll pace the room a lot and notice your brain swelling ever so slightly. Richard Simmons may start to appear like a guy you'd want to invite over to the house.

Yet such "help" is totally counterproductive to what the new Vivarin campaign is intended for. Taking Vivarin will *not* help you get your studying done. For one reason, you won't be able to hold your pen still. For another, your level of concentration will be equal to that of a bag of Tostitos.

(I know that's a strange analogy and makes little sense, but I wrote it while under the influence of Vivarin, so *there*.)

I would compare a Vivarin-induced state of being to my Christmas 1992 tonsillectomy, when I was continually hopped up on Percocet. Let it be known that — Coca-Cola aside — I put no drugs into my body without a doctor's prescription, but I must say, Percocet is a wonderful drug. Indeed prescribed by my doctor, I was taking two of them every three hours for pain, which I didn't have time for (obscure Carly Simon reference, again written while on Vivarin).

Percocet numbed my entire body, made my blood feel toasty-warm and life peachy-keen. The slightest thing would put me in the absolute best mood. *Example: Donahue* came on; life held no grudges.

There were side effects, of course: I got little sleep, they were a bitch to swallow and, on more than one occasion, I found myself carrying on conversations with my Chia Pet, discussing pratfall king Buster Keaton and the aesthetics of dislocation.

In contrast, Vivarin caused me to vomit the whole night through. My stomach, to employ a euphemism, got spelunked.

My advice? Don't make it a Vivarin night. Twelve ounces of any syrupy carbonated beverage should do the trick.

Vivarin: It's safer than heroin, but not as fun as Flintstones Chewable Vitamins.

SAID

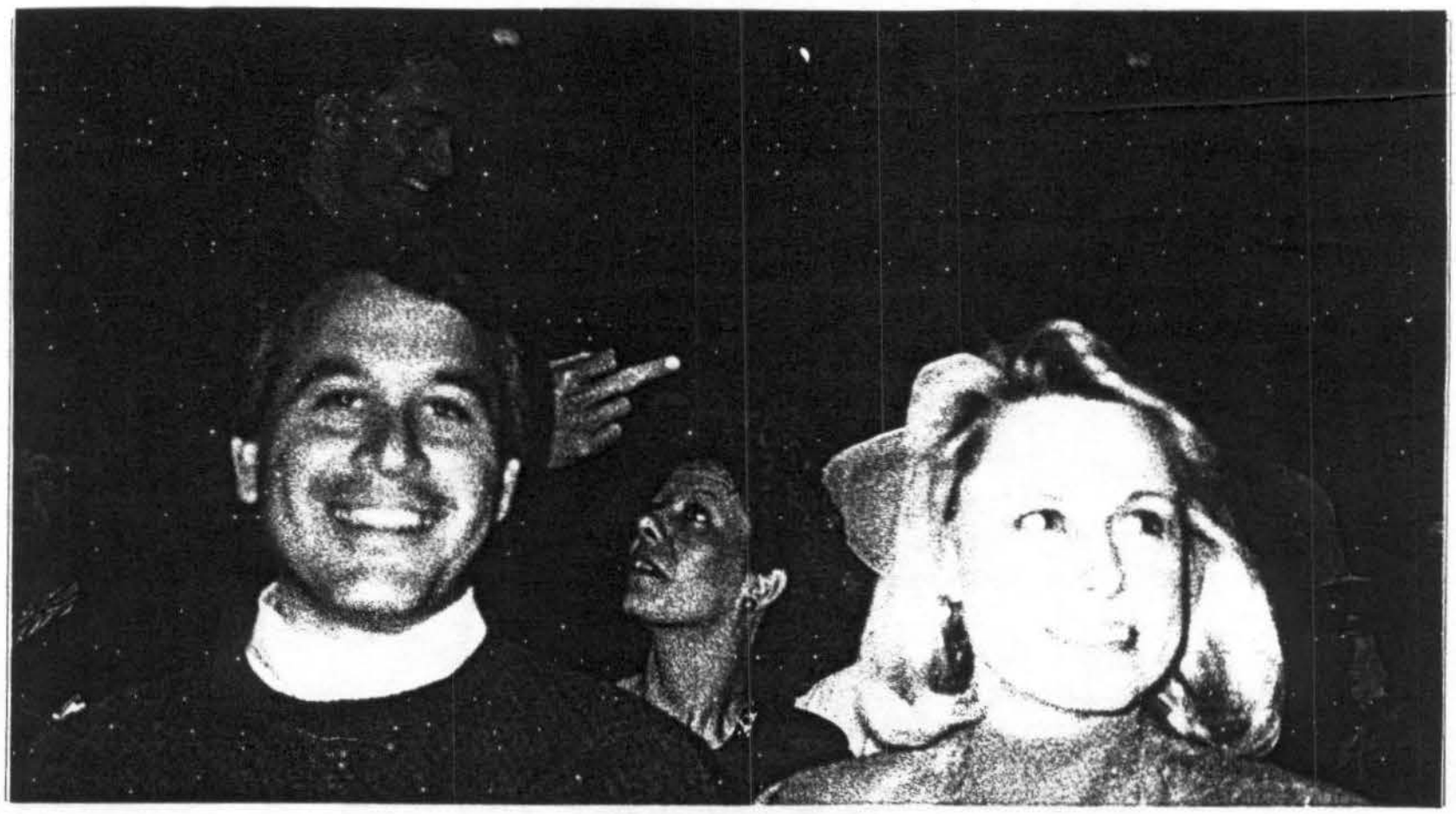
Overheard at a press screening for *When a Man Loves a Woman*:

"It's about this man and this woman, and they just *looove* each other with all their hearts."

—some bitch who talked through the whole damn thing

SNAPPED

Our Wacky Look at Crazy Paparazzi



At a Neil Young concert, an audience member shows his appreciation for Oklahoma Governor David Walters and his lovely wife Rhonda.

At OKC's Fall Fest South, Margaret Watson and Ron Rogers sample scrumptious turkey drumsticks (above), while a giant chicken named Seymour Art (right) gives a friendly wave with the unfrightened Jacob Spall.

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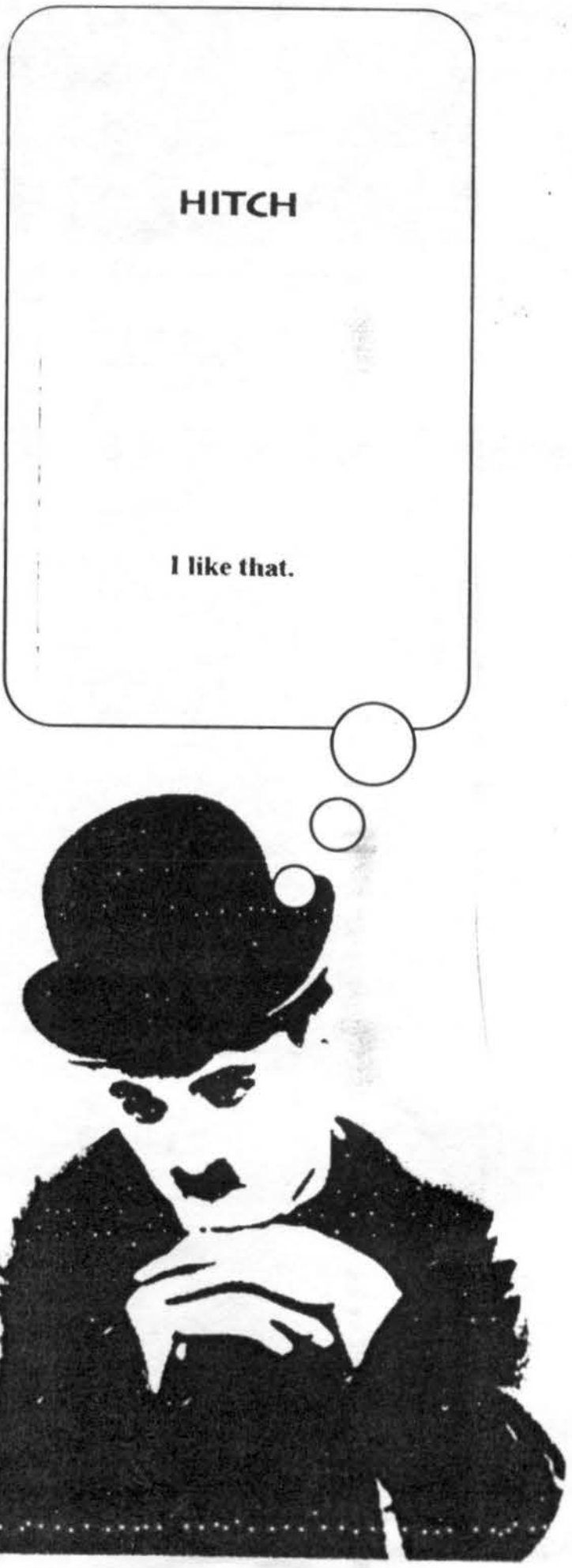

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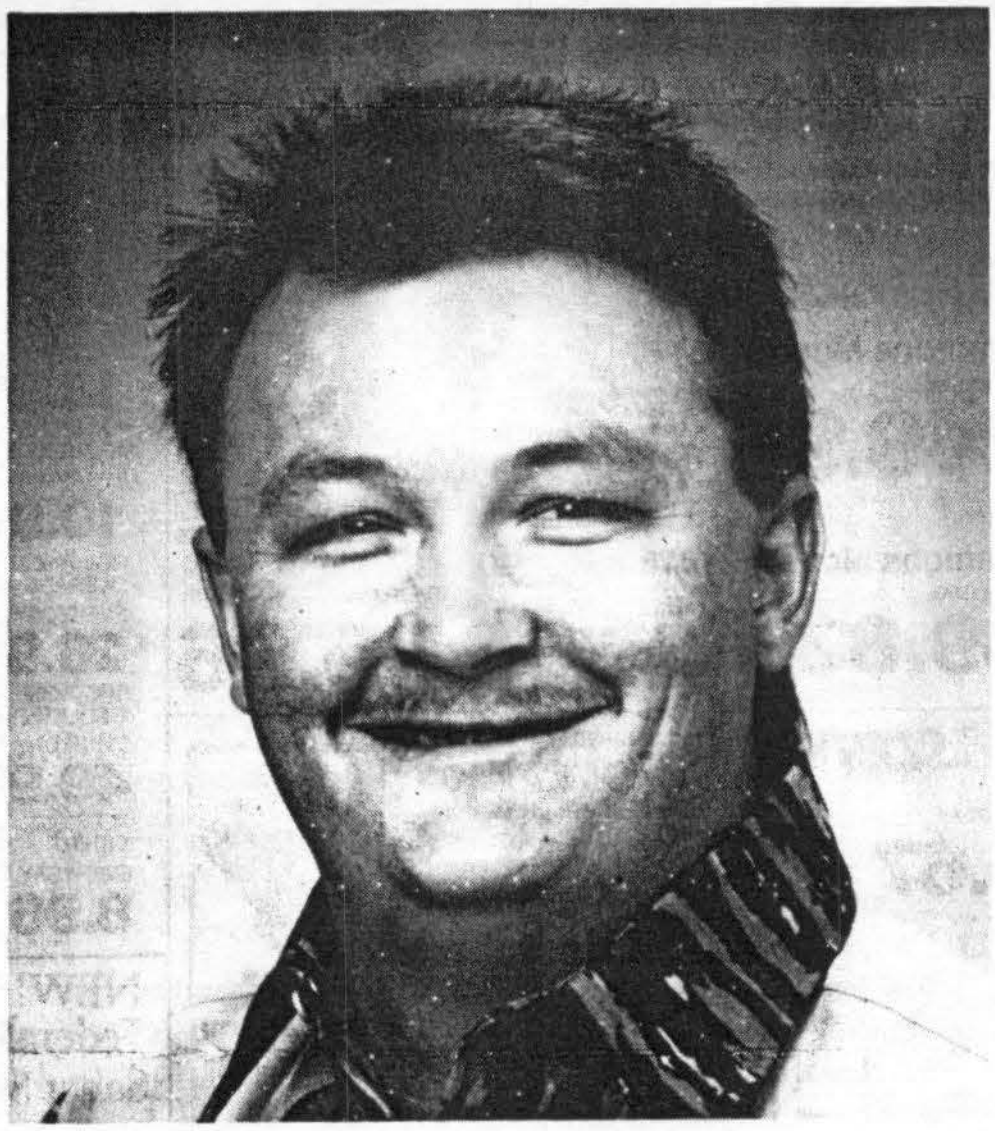

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